APOCALYPTIC JESUS



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THE APOCALYPTIC JESUS



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PRINCE AND PRIEST

BEING

NOTES ON REVELATION

BY

JAMES CUMMING

JEDBURGH

WITH INTRODUCTION BY
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PREFACE.

ONE summer evening, while angling in the River Teviot, this thought crossed my mind, Is the Book of Revelation intended merely for the learned, especially the historically learned, or for the Church in general? I then resolved to read the book carefully through at a sitting, and try if I could see any train of thought running through it, or any plan on which it may have been constructed. I thought that I saw its object, and this little book is the result of studies undertaken to verify what it seemed to me to teach.

J. C.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following little Treatise is interesting as the result of independent reflexion on a most sublime and beautiful Book of Scripture by an intelligent and educated mind. It is marked by great good sense, and displays a singularly wide acquaintance with Scripture. In reading the Apocalypse, the author has felt obliged to abandon definitely what he calls the "chronological rut," that is, the idea that the Book is a continuous prophecy of events whether in the history of the world or the Church. This first step in the right direction was naturally followed by another. If the seer's visions be not predictions of successive occurrences, which we may verify by turning over the pages of history, they must be the expressions of general ideas in God's redemptive guidance of his Church and his providential rule of all things for her good. But how shall it be discovered what ideas the visions do express? Obviously in no other way than by carefully attending to the Prophet's language, and especially to the references it contains to God's great redemptive acts in connection with his ancient people. The seer's mind is steeped in Old Testament history and prophecy, and many of his visions, such as those of the Trumpets and Vials, are little else than a new setting of the great judgments of God on the enemies of His people, and the sinful world at the great epochs of Israel's redemption, such as the Exodus and the downfall of Babylon. His theme in writing to the Churches is, "your redemption draweth nigh," and in representing this redemption he reproduces many acts from the drama of a former redemption. Mr Cumming has clearly observed this fact, and seen that it must be made the basis of any sensible method of interpreting the Apocalypse. Hence he has gathered around each section of the revelation a great number of other passages from Scripture, so that in their concentrated light the chief idea of the section stands clearly out. Perhaps the reader may feel that passages have been accumulated in unnecessary fulness, and that in consequence the book is heavier than it might have been. This may be; but the great merit of the book lies in the thorough application of this method throughout. Probably also another thing may be felt. The author has applied his mind chiefly to the individual parts of John's prophecy, and given less attention to the connection of the whole. There is a certain want in his treatise of that callida junctura of parts which gives to the reader a feeling of progress. The book, of course, is rather a contribution to the interpretation of the Apocalypse than a formal exposition of it, and it may be safely said that its method is good throughout, and that its individual parts are all suggestive.

A. B. DAVIDSON.

INTRODUCTION.

THE general impression of the Book of Revelation is that it is a mystery too deep to be comprehended, even though it contains the encouraging words, "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein."

Many earnest students have felt it to be a sealed book, and even commentators seem to have been too much attracted by a mistaken light, and have stumbled into a slough of profane history without getting any settled issues except such as may have suited their own prejudices.

The student who takes the Book of Revelation in one hand and a chronological table in the other under the impression that prophecy is revealed by acts of providence, and that such acts are to be found in History, and that no farther aid is required, soon finds a few apparent coincidences; but the result on the whole is a sorry patchwork

of compromises and forced adjustments, which when subjected to the light of Scripture will be found to be unsatisfactory.

Were the student to sit down and read carefully for himself the whole book, observing the visions as much as possible from St John's point of view, noting the places, actors, scenes, and doxologies, he would find all these changing from time to time, and passages where these or any of them recur would be found to be explanatory of each other.

The feeling doubtless will arise that many things written in this book must have been accomplished, and that time is nearer its end than it was at the beginning of this era. Still we must feel the weakness of the finite eye as compared with the Omniscient Infinite, and we have to bear in mind what our Lord said, Matt. xxiv. 36—"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels in heaven, but my Father only."

The object of prophecy seems to be the comfort of believers and the glory of God, as confirming his providence. The exact periods are

undiscernible till revealed by inspiration after the accomplishment of the ultimate design. It was so in the prophecy of the Babylonish Captivity, and in the advent of the Messiah, Luke xvii. 18—"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation;" so we are apt to overlook gradual development, and lay too much stress on crises which appear great to our mind, or have been of great importance in our time. Matt. xxviii. 16.

One important point to be borne in mind in expounding a scheme such as the Book of Revelation, is that the parts of the synopsis must be congruous, and that truth is self-confirmatory and self-explanatory.

A source of error is that having accepted one coincidence, commentators have been forced to make all subsequent historical matters fit, in order to keep up an historical sequence, and so have been unduly hurried.

THE REVELATION OF ST JOHN THE DIVINE.

CHAPTER I.

Verses 1-3. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

THE Revelation is addressed to the churches, as may be seen more clearly in the 22d chapter, 16th verse—"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches."

The method of teaching in this book is best explained by reference to St Paul's teaching in

1 Cor. ii. 12, 13—" Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth: comparing spiritual things with spiritual"—as the book is full of extracts from the prophets, especially those immediately before, during, and after the Babylonish Captivity.

It is of importance to observe the Divine method of procedure as here exhibited. A revelation has been determined on. The Father, who has committed all power to the Son, commits this revelation to him; and Jesus Christ, by his angel, who is the Holy Spirit, signifies it to John.

The Holy Spirit, who was to be sent by Jesus and the Father to teach his disciples all things, and to bring to their remembrance all that he said unto them (John xiv. 26), takes part here, as he does in other parts of this book, and conspicuously in the 10th chapter, with Divine characteristics: so this apocalypse is a gift of the Three-one God to man.

These encouraging words, "Blessed is he that

readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein," which are repeated in chap. xxii. 6, 7—"And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book," and which are in keeping with our Lord's words, Luke xi. 28—"Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it," also the command in the 22nd chapter—"Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book," should so show to the Church that this book is for general benefit, as to remove any diffidence in trying to understand its meaning, and any doubt that God will not reveal even this unto it.

The words "prophecy" and "must shortly come to pass" require special notice, as upon them depends the bias with which the student must go to work in dealing with the whole plan of this book.

Prophecy. The word prophecy in the New Testament almost invariably means preaching or teaching. 1 Cor. xiv. 1, 3 — "Follow after

charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. . . . But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." See also Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. xi. 5.

If this book be taken as a continuation of the 24th chapter of Matthew, foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, there is a danger of falling into a chronological rut, which is contrary to the Divine method. Matt. xxiv. 36—"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels in heaven, but my Father only;" and verse 42-" Watch therefore, for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh." It seems, however, more reasonably to follow Matt. xxviii. 18—"All authority has been given unto me in heaven and on earth;" verses 19, 20 -"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Also John xvi. 13, and Acts i. 6-11—"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore

again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts ii. 32, 33— "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Luke xxiv. 44-48—"And he said unto them. These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the

law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." Then, seeing that such emphasis is laid on the resurrection and ascension of Christ, there is a necessity for a revelation such as the apocalypse provides to show the connection between Christ and his Church, his personal rule first of the churches then existing, and afterwards of the world till the end of time, including his exaltation, superintendence, and the ultimate union of the whole mystical body, with general submission to the Father, who in the end as Lord God Almighty will be All in All.

"Must shortly come to pass." The expressions, "must shortly come to pass," "I come quickly," "a little while, and ye behold me no more, and again a little while, and ye shall see me," and "for the time is at hand," seem rather to make the lessons personal and pre-

sent than remote and historical—applicable to mankind individually in all ages, and not as if part were accomplished, and of little account now.

Verses 4-6. John to the seven churches which are in Asia: grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

John's salutation to the seven churches which are in Asia seems applicable to the whole book. There is a marked parallelism between the first and last chapters. In Chap. xxii. 16—"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches;" so that besides the special letters in the 2nd and 3rd chapters, the rest of the book was for these churches referred to in the salutation and doxology.

The probable reasons for the seven churches being specially selected when the book is for universal use, are their being nearest Patmos, and the churches among whom John had chiefly worked. It is said to be so of Ephesus, the nearest of all the churches to Patmos, and to which John went when recalled from exile, and where he laboured till he died. The salutation is in the name of the Trinity, from whom he got his commission. The doxology is in honour of the Redeemer.

After this blessing of grace and peace from the three persons of the Godhead, recounting the mediatorial services of Jesus Christ, and ascribing praise to him for these favours to the redeemed, there follows, as may be found in the last chapter, another picture, the reverse of that of those washed from their sins in his own blood.

Verse 7. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

There is here reference to Zechariah xii. 10, 11—" And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son,

and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon" for Josiah. Ps. xxii. 16, 17; John xix. 37. The position is not that of the sixth seal. It is rather a merciful and gracious warning, and is in antithesis to the previous verses.

VERSE 8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

This verse comes in as a confirmation by the first person of the Godhead.

VERSE 9. I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

It is understood that John was sent into exile in Patmos for the testimony of Jesus Christ, and thus was in sympathy with the members of the various churches with whom he was about to correspond, who were victims of persecution, imprisonment, and death. Verses 10-12. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." This gives an idea of the rapidity of the visions, and is a recognition of the Christian Sabbath.

"And as I turned to see the voice" (whose it was) "I saw seven golden candlesticks," or lampstands. The candlesticks were separate: not like the golden candlestick or lampstand of the Tabernacle, which consisted of a shaft and branches, but each complete in itself, one for the church in each of the cities, as, for instance, see the threat to remove the candlestick from Ephesus.

Verses 13-16. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breasts with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

Here Christ is represented as going among the churches, as we find in the 20th verse, made visible in all his terrible or his adorable and adoration-compelling majesty to John, but invisible to the churches at whose meetings he was present. This is an idea too little recognised in these days, even on the more solemn occasions.

It must be remembered that every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable in all time for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction, which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work, and therefore the Divine presence should be more realized.

The golden girdle was a sign of authority and eminence. It was a kingly symbol with Eliakim. Isa. xxii. 20—" I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and will commit thy government into his hand." In Isa.

xi, 5, of Christ it is said—"And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." The girdle was also a part of the high priests' attire (Ex. xxviii. 4), and Christ is a king and priest for ever (Ps. cx). He is a priest. Heb. vii. 24-28—"But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

His head and his hair were like white wool. In this Christ differs from the last time John saw him at the ascension.

The description here agrees with Daniel's (vii. 9) vision, when he saw the Ancient of Days, whose garment was white as snow, the hair of his

head like pure wool, and his throne like the fiery flame.

John xvii. 5—"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." The ancient glory was resumed.

The voice as the sound of many waters. It was compared to a trumpet (ver. 10). In the 29th Psalm 3, 4—"The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty," the noise of floods and thunderstorms being the only analogies to which the voice of the Lord can be likened within the powers of human endurance.

The seven stars are the ministers of the seven churches. These he holds in his own special keeping.

The two-edged sword. "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. vi. 17). "For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. iv. 12). The two-edged sword is referred to in the case of the church in Pergamum.

"And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." Num. vi. 24-26—"The Lord bless thee and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Ps. iv. 6—"Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us."

Verses 17-19. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.

This John who lay on Jesus' bosom, the disciple whom Jesus loved, the disciple who with his brother and his mother using her influence, asked to be placed next him when he should sit on his throne, fell senseless at the sight of the Divine Majesty. Peter felt this in Christ's state of humiliation. Luke v. 8, 10—"But Simon Peter, when he saw it (the draught of fishes), fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." Again, at the transfiguration. Matt. xvii. 6, 7. Daniel had this experience, chap. x.

11-"And when he had spoken the word unto me, I stood trembling; then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel." Abram also. Gen. xv. 1— "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Gen. xxvi. 24—"And God appeared unto Isaac the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham, thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee." There are many other passages where God comforts his people with these words. 1 Cor. x. 13— "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." 2 Cor. xii. 9 -"My grace is sufficient for thee, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

> Verse 20. The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

The references to the seven lampstands in the 12th and 13th verses, and the stars in the right hand in the 16th verse, explained in the 20th verse to be the seven churches, and the seven angels of the churches taken with the 5th verse of the second chapter, suggest Christ's care of the churches. They are emblems, and are symbolic of Christ's government and remembrancers, which, from the falling away of the churches or their quenching of the Spirit, may be removed, and their names blotted out of the Book of Life. The reverse of the promise to the church in Sardis. Rev. iii. 5—" He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

There is a kind of analogy to the lampstands constituting a church, in a mace constituting a court by symbolising royal authority.

A lamp, candlestick, or candle are convertible terms, the candlestick being a tall shaft on which either a lamp or a candle could be set. They are employed in the Old Testament as significant of protection and support. They cheer and guide. 1 Kings xv. 4; 2 Sam. xxii. 29. Job xxix. 3—"When his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness;" and in Rev. xxii. 5—"No more need of a candle." The type has superseded the antitype, for the Lord God shall give them light.

CHAPTERS II, III.

CHAP. II. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those

things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is; and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes

like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel. which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication: and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they - speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ve have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

CHAP. III. And unto the angel of the

church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard. and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief. and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

In dealing with these two chapters, which may be taken together, it is not intended to notice the history of the churches, about which there is a great deal of uncertainty, nor to explain the references, well enough known, no doubt, to them, but which cannot now be accurately ascertained. The churches written to are addressed specially according to their different circumstances. These may give some idea of what the early Christians had to contend with. The letters are of use in showing the Divine method of dealing with churches, the omniscient supervision, the rebukes and chastenings, sympathy and rewards; and may be applicable to all time in a practical way.

The letters fall in as an episode, which must have awakened the early Christians with awful power and directness, and are useful now for selfexamination. Without referring at length to the lessons, a few points may be noticed.

The similarity of construction.

1st. A command to John to write to the angel.

2nd. The Spirit communicates the message, giving as his authority Jesus Christ, referring to Him by specifying a characteristic mentioned in the first chapter.

3rd. "I know thy works"—repeated to all the churches, showing omniscient watchfulness, with a narrative, special message, exhortation, and prophetic announcement.

4th. A promise made to him that overcometh.

5th. A proclamation after the Eastern fashion—
"He that hath ears to hear let him hear," this proclamation to the first three churches preceding, and to the last four following, the promises to the conquerors.

The churches in the various cities named would be composed of the people, who would assemble variously in the dwellings of eminent disciples, say such as Onesiphorus at Ephesus; Lydia, if she were at home, in Thyatira; Nymphas in Laodicea, where the Epistle to the Colossians was read, and those who might meet in the synagogues.

In reference to Ephesus, Paul writes (1 Cor. xvi. 8, 9)—"I will tarry at Ephesus, for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." Some of these were probably the worshippers of Diana, the Nicolaitanes, and false prophets. The First Epistle to Timothy, written from Laodicea to him when at Ephesus, also throws light on the state of that church, as also the Epistle to the Ephesians.

CHAPTER IV.

After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne. and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

This chapter is to a large extent the key to the main prophecy of this book.

John is translated in the spirit to the Heavenly Holy of Holies. He who sits on the throne and is clothed with ineffable glory, reveals himself by a rainbow, that symbol which was "the token of

the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. The immediate attendants seen were twenty-four elders and four living creatures. Elders among the Israelites were a ruling and prophetic order. Num. xi. 25. Hence human sympathies are symbolized. The four living creatures are the leaders in the ascription of praise that is due to the persons of the Godhead. The praise given in this chapter indicates the first person, Lord God Almighty, and to him as in the highest sense, the Creator, the four living creatures, and the elders who cast their crowns before the throne, say, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." They also lead in the new song of the redeemed in the next chapter.

The living creatures here resemble the seraphim in Isaiah's vision (Isaiah vi. 1) of the glory of God, in their adoration and praise, and in having six wings.

They resemble also the living creatures in Ezekiel i., in the vision of the likeness of the glory of the Lord, differing in this, that each being in Ezekiel's vision had four faces combining the likenesses of the four living creatures here in each one. "As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle."

The cherubim over the mercy seat, or lid of the ark, in the Holy of Holies, where the cherubim hovered (Exod. xxv.), were illustrative of the glory of the heavenly temple.

God may always be addressed as in Ps. lxxx. 1—"Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth," for so God has revealed himself. Heb. viii. 5—"Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."

CHAPTER V.

And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel pro-

claiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me. Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld. and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand

times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

In the same Holy of Holies the vision continues. There is seen in the right hand of the Father a book sealed with seven seals, the Diploma of him who was to be crowned with honour and glory, into whose hand the Father committed all judgment. The passage indicates Christ's exaltation. Daniel vii. 13, 14—"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion,

which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

The purport of the book is understood, no one considering himself worthy to open it, and on its being accepted by the Lamb, the Doxologies saying, why he is worthy, and what he is worthy of. Namely, to receive kingly honours, blessing, and glory and power. "For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God," &c. The same honours were paid as to the Father.

It is to be seen from this view that the various seals are not events, but characteristics of the Son, and that in defending believers and punishing unbelievers, he may exercise two qualities in the same scene. The same honours are paid except the casting of the crowns.

Christ's glory will be complete when he shall have put all his enemies under his feet; and so we find near the end of this book, xix. 11, 12—The heaven opened, and the word of God in the same character as in the first seal on a white horse, and on his head many crowns.

CHAPTER VI.

Verses 1-4. And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

The Lamb is standing in the midst of the throne before the Beasts, and in the midst of the twenty-four Elders. He takes the book out of the hand of the Father, and he opens

The First Seal, which contains a commission written in living characters. The first living creature like a lion, fitting usher to the lion of the tribe of Judah, says, Come and see. There is represented one armed with a bow, sitting on a white horse, and he goes forth conquering, and to conquer. This is what is written in the 45th

Psalm — "In thy majesty ride prosperously. Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies." The victory is to be obtained over sin, spiritual enemies, and opposers of the truth.

In the absence of light from Scripture, there does not appear any good reason for attaching meaning to the colours of the horses, except as showing the distinct offices of Christ's kingship, the horses showing power. This is apparent in Zech. vi. 2, 3. The seventh trumpet, and the 17th, 18th, and 19th chapters particularly refer to this office.

The Second Seal is opened. The second beast, like a calf or ox, says, Come and see. This sacrificial animal would be likely to have an assuring influence on one like John, brought up under the Levitical dispensation, when he who came not to give peace on earth, but rather division, should ride forth with his great sword to execute vengeance on his enemies, and avenge his people. The character here represented. Taking Zech. i. 11 into account—"And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and

is at rest," the removal of peace would be a characteristic of Christ as destroying the feeling of secure indifference.

VERSES 5, 6. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse: and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

The Third Seal is opened, and the third beast, having the face of a man, characteristic of reason, prudence, and wisdom, says, Come and see. John saw a black horse and a rider with a pair of balances in his hand, indicative of exactness and justice. A voice from the midst of the four beasts, whose special duty it has been noticed is to ascribe honour and glory and thanks to him on the throne, showing thereby in a most marked way the divineness of this characteristic, proclaims, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine."

This scene represents the acts of a beneficent providence as part of the character of the Lamb.

The Psalmist frequently praises God for the special mercy of giving food. In the 104th Psalm, verse 15, where the majesty and providence of God are praised, these are particularly mentioned, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart. The care of God over the righteous is pointedly referred to in Psalm xxxvii. 25,—"Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." And even more pointedly in Isaiah xxxiii. 16, among many of the highest assurances, there is the promise to him that walketh righteously—"Bread shall be given him, and his waters shall be sure," and so it is with the Lamb

That the wheat and the barley should be given by measure does not necessarily mean any stint. The manna was carefully measured, and he who giveth his people all things richly to enjoy, when he fed the thousands caused all the fragments to be gathered up that nothing should be lost. He also taught his disciples to ask only for daily bread. In looking forward to the seventh chapter, John is told by one of the Elders that the multitude of the redeemed will hunger no more, neither thirst any more, for the Lamb which is in the

midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them to fountains of living waters.

The measure referred to is said to have contained the quantity sufficient for a man's daily sustenance, and the price within a working man's reach.

The caution not to waste the oil and the wine, comforts superadded to the necessities, is in accordance both with the beneficence and economy of providence. Proverbs xxi. 17. On the other hand, "He that *loveth* oil and wine shall not be rich." Ezek. iv. 16; Levit. xxvi. 26.

Verses 7, 8. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The Fourth Seal is opened, and the fourth living creature like an Eagle says, Come and see, And John saw a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword,

and with hunger, and with the beasts of the earth.

The kingly power involves protection and punishment. Ezek. xlv. 9 — "Thus saith the Lord God; Let it suffice you, O princes of Israel: remove violence and spoil, and execute judgment and justice, take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord God."

Death being mounted on a horse expresses the exercise of princely power, and a fourth part of the earth a limitation of that power. The seal opened by the Lamb forms one of the commissions contained in the book which he received out of the right hand of Him that sat on the throne. The opening is announced by one of the living creatures who ascribe honour, and glory, and thanks to Him who sits upon the throne, and who join in the anthem of all creation in ascribing blessing, and honour, and glory, and power to Him on the throne and to the Lamb.

It may be asked, Why should Death and Hell be exhibited in the Holy of Holies? Why equally with the first seal should one of the living creatures announce them? Why in a book exhibiting Christ's power should they be brought forward so prominently? As we find the references

in other parts of Revelation to Death and Hell (the grave or Hades) contributing to Christ's glory, it must therefore be seen that the Lamb's commission extended over Death and Hades. Paul says, 1 Cor. xv. 24-26—"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." And in the 54th Then shall be brought to pass the saying of Isaiah xxv. 8.—Death is swallowed up in victory. Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul here takes up the language of Isaiah, and so may all creation, and it appears to be plainly one of the points for which honour, and glory, and thanks are ascribed when the Lamb took the book.

In Hosea xiii. 14—"O Death, I will be thy plagues, and O Grave, I will be thy destruction," reference is made to the same conquest. In the first chapter of this book, the Son of man in His first appearance to John reveals Himself—"I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and I have the keys

of death and Hades." In Rev. xx. 13, 14, Death and Hades deliver up their dead, and Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.

Reflecting on these four kingly commissions of Christ, as particularly indicated by the horses and the four living creatures, the immediate attendants on the throne, and trying to find out the impression produced on John's mind, and the lessons which they were to convey to the church, the two following passages seem applicable: Psalm xci. 1, 5, 6—"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness." Eph. i. 18-23—"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not

only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

Verses 9-11. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

The Fifth Seal. The kingly offices of Christ having been represented to John, the church next falls to be shown.

Many passages of Scripture prove the inseparable connection betwixt Christ and His redeemed ones. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "Because I live, ye shall live also." Eph. iv. 13—"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the fulness of Christ."

1 Cor. xii. 12—"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." John xvii. 10—"All mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them;" and in the 24th verse—"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." 1 Cor. vi. 15—"Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?" 1 Cor. xii. 27—"Now are ye the body of Christ, and members in particular."

To John the exhibition of the high position to which martyrs are raised—their being in the immediate presence of the throne, their being given to Christ in this title-deed or diploma—would be a consolation, encouragement, and confirmation of his faith, while he was shown that many others were to be slain for a similar testimony. Hebrews xi. 40; and xii. 1, 22, 23—"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,"—show how the martyrs are held in this position; and the enumeration in Heb. xi. makes it interesting, as the list suggests a continuation reaching to the present times, and doubtless this was St Paul's idea when he used it for the encouragement of the church in his time.

The cry for vengeance is justified. Luke xviii. 7 -"And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?"

2 Thess. i. 3-12—"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which

ye also suffer: seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." God has provided for the righteous being in everlasting remembrance (Ps. exii. 6).

In Gen. iv. 10—"What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth;" and in Luke xi. 50, is the most fearful

denunciation against those who resisted Christ—"That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation," as if it were, that it is not the partizanship of a man's lifetime, but the opposition of the whole world's history that is to be brought against him if he join himself to what is contrary to Christ. The answer to the prayers of the martyrs is noticeable. It was agreeable to God's will, and so it will be granted in his good time. In the meantime his servants were specially honoured with white robes, and they were assured of their prayers being heard.

VERSES 12-17. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal; and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

CHAPTER VII.

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were

sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand. After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saving, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

The Sixth Seal. In considering this seal, the twelfth and subsequent verses of the sixth chapter and all the seventh chapter have to be combined. Our Lord, in Matt. xxiv. 29, 30, 31, said—"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Also in Luke xiii. 27, 28, 29—"But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you

yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God."

As throwing light on the "the sealed tribes," Matt. vii. 11, 12—"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," compare with Matt. xxi. 43. Because the Jews rejected Christ he tells them—"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

In this seal is set forth the Lamb's work, the punishment through time, and the ultimate discomfiture of his adversaries, and the preservation and ultimate bliss of those who bear his cross and follow him.

In regard to the phenomena, "The sun became black, and the moon became as blood, and the islands were moved out of their places," Peter (Acts ii. 19), quoting the prophet Joel, refers to similar signs as indicative of the strivings of God's Spirit to cause people to call on the name of the Lord that they may be saved.

This view is supported by looking into the 16th chapter of Revelation, where we find the fourth vial is poured out on the sun, and men blasphemed and repented not; and the fifth angel poured his vial on the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they blasphemed and repented not; and in the seventh vial every island fled away, and the mountains were not found, and men blasphemed God.

That notable day of the Lord does come. The one side calls on the mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and the wrath of the Lamb. The other shouts salvation to our God which sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb.

CHAPTER VIII.

Verse 1. And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

The Seventh Seal. In this silence there was a cessation of the Halleluia described, chap. xix. 6—"And I heard as it were a voice of

a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of many thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

Silence in heaven? The songs only comprehensible by the 144,000 are still. Angels and saints with eyes and ears intent are in suspense. The noise, the rushing of many waters, thunderspates, are still. This is indicative of epochs in eternity, as was the descent into this world of the Divine Son, and the constitution of our earth to all but the ever present—the great Omniscient from all eternity—the ever present I am.

As the sealed book appears to have contained the kingly offices which none but the Lamb could fill, and an exposition of transactions which He was to conduct till the end of time, as shown in the sixth seal, there remains only one duty unperformed, and that, we are told, is to close the individual acts of the Son. It is reasonable to suppose that this is what is referred to in the seventh seal, with which the diploma ends, and which is opened in silence.

It is a matter to be carried out betwixt the Father and the Son, and is of too grand a character to be represented as any one of the other seals was, and of too sacred a majesty, perhaps, for even the highest created beings to witness. In 1 Cor. xv. 24-28, Paul writes—"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Our Father, may Thy kingdom come.

There is a theory incidental to the above quotation from St Paul. The universal teaching of marriage symbolises the union of Christ and His Church. He is represented as the Head, and the Church as the members; but there is a union which makes a union consistent with the above submission. The sinking of the personality when the oneness of the Godhead and the oneness of the incorruptible body permeated by the Divine mind may form a super-celestial bride.

Introduction to the Trumpets.

The seals which go beyond time are followed by the trumpets, which are confined to time.

The seals having given their indications till the consummation of all things, the eighth chapter presents the divine method in another phase; as the seals showed the kingly powers of Christ, so the trumpets show Christ in His priestly and prophetic offices.

Taking a general glance at the symbolism of the trumpet visions, one observes the introduction of the temple and the principal furniture of the temple: the censer, instruction coming from the golden altar, the altar of incense, worshippers, the golden candlesticks and olive oil, and then the ark of the testimony, the trumpets themselves being significant temple instruments.

To understand the trumpet scenes, it is necessary to look back to the holy place in the ancient tabernacle as the symbolism of its service is employed; and it is necessary to have a proper understanding of Christ's intercessory work, because an angel is spoken of here, and no angel can fill the mediatorial office, Christ himself while He is the great Judge being priest, altar, sacrifice,

and incense—the Holy Spirit co-operating for merciful purposes.

The uses of the trumpets and other symbols in use among the Israelites should also be considered.

In the tabernacle, the golden altar of incense was placed immediately outside the veil of the Holy of Holies, and close in front of the mercy-seat. There was a perpetual daily service on it with incense, and once a year atonement was made on it. Beside it, close to the veil, was the golden candlestick with seven lamps, which were kept continually burning (Exod. xxvii. 20).

The incense and oil for the lamps were commanded to be of perfect purity and sacredness. When the priest attended to the one, he had at the same time to attend to the other (Exod. xxx. 7). There was a unity, so to speak, between them. Both were made of pure gold. Both were kept continually burning. Both were close to the outside of the veil of the Holy of Holies and the mercy-seat, and it was enjoined that both were to be attended to at the same time by the priest, the lesson being, that while the real work of intercession should be going on, a Divine light would be imparted to enable those interested to appreciate it.

John xvi. 13, 14—"Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that will he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Ps. xxvii. 1—"The Lord is my light and my salvation." John viii. 12--" I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Rom. viii. 26, 27—"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

After the shepherd was smitten and the sheep scattered. Zech. xiii. 8, 9—"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will

hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, the Lord is my God."

The seven angels having had trumpets given to them, speaks to more than the divine light represented by the candlestick; they have an evangelistic and a warning character, and so far represent Christ's prophetic office. Ezek. xxxiii.

The trumpets among the Israelites were kept in the temple. They were sounded over the burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, "that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God." They were a signal for marching, and in war the Israelites were promised on their sounding the trumpets—"And ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God; and ye shall be saved from your enemies."

There are three particular views of the priestly office of Christ.

He was Mediator.—By virtue of the new covenant, he can say (John xvii.)—"Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." And because he is one with his mystical body, in full omniscient sympathy with it, and at the same time one with his Father, the prayers of Christ's people, through him as a medium, "I am the way," are accepted, so to speak, necessarily.

He was our Advocate.—He pleads our cause on legal grounds. He was made under the law: 1. By having an ostensible Father. 2. He submitted himself, in terms of the Levitical law, to circumcision. 3. Desiring to fulfil all righteousness, he put himself under John's baptism. 4. He submitted to state law by paying tribute. 5. He underwent a penal death that he might redeem those under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons. Romans x. 4—"Christ the end of the law to every one that believeth." 6. He put himself under natural laws for human sympathy in coming to our planet and assuming our nature—being born, being obedient to his parents for a time, suffering hunger, thirst, weariness, and dying, his condition giving him no privileges, exempting him from the full bearing of the law.

A very comprehensive idea is got by considering that the Lawmaker put himself under, and fulfilled, on our account, and for our example, the whole law—justice, mercy, love, and truth.

As God declared from Sinai. The Lord God. merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, so Christ in his humanity made these manifest, being God manifest in the flesh.

He was under prophetical law fulfilling all prophecy.

He was our Intercessor.—And this view is the one specially referred to in this chapter. It is not only that Christ entreats God on our behalf before conversion, as on Christ's interceding with God for Peter's deliverance before his conversion. Luke xxii. 31—"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you (buas, the eleven disciples), that he might sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." But while we are yet enemies he reconciles us to God. Isaiah lxiii. 9—" In all their affliction he was afflicted, and in his love and pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Though he is holy, harmless, and undefiled, he is touched with a feeling of our infirmities. Col. i. 21-"And you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death."

He invites men. "Ho, every one that thirsteth." "Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden."

He compels men. Psalm exix.—"Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy law."

He chastises. Heb. xii. 9, 10—" He chastises us for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness."

While on earth he taught that such occurrences as the fall of the tower of Siloam, and the massacre of the Galileans by Pilate, were calls to repentance, and in the parable of the supper, Luke xiv. 23—"Go out into the hedges and highways, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Physical forces are brought to bear in God's good providence, as in Psalm 107, where hunger and thirst, affliction, death, and storms are sent to cause men to cry for salvation. Also Micah vi. 2—"For the Lord had a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel," and he refers them to his dealings with them in the wilderness. See also Isaiah, chapters xxxiv., xxxv.

This intercession, reasoning, or controversy with man is represented by casting the censer, filled with fire, upon the earth, followed by voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake, such as are described in the fourth chapter, and out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices, the censer being the emblem of intercession or prayer, and the lightnings, &c., being the representation of God's gracious intercourse with man. When God delivered the law on Sinai, the mount quaked, and there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet, exceeding loud. No such visible presence as on Sinai is to be expected ordinarily, but there is an assurance by these manifestations to John of the Divine personal dealings with man. The trumpets, then, may be taken as manifestations of Divine dealings, particularly addressed to God's chosen people from the holy place.

Heb. xii. 25, 26—"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven."

The Psalmist, in the 29th Psalm, calls thunder the voice of the Lord, and describing a thunderstorm, ascribes to God glory and strength, and calls on the people to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. In his temple doth every one speak of his glory, and sums up—" The Lord sitteth King for ever. The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace." And Psalm lxvi. 3—"Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee."

THE TRUMPETS.

The first four trumpets may be classed together.

They represent physical acts, or admonitions, and judgments of so terrible a kind as to be comparable only to awful convulsions in the natural world, pointedly showing the hand of God.

God is terrible when he pleads with men. Psalm xlvii. 2-" For the Lord most high is terrible. He is a great King over all the earth." Psalm lxvi. 5-7—"Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men. He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him. He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves."

God is terrible when he pleads against men, as

in the punishment of rebellious Israel by Gog. Ezek. xxxviii. 19-23—"For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel: so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and Thus will I magnify myself, and brimstone. sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord."

Reference also may be made to the doings in Egypt and the wilderness as evidences of Divine authority. Physical powers were, in some degree, committed to the prophets, and in the 11th chapter, verse 6, the witnesses had certain powers over the physical world committed to them.

Verse 2. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

Compare with chapter iv. 5—" And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." Also chapter v. 6—" And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."

Verses 3-12. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven

angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

There is here the first indication of the co-opertion with Christ in his priestly and prophetic offices of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the prompter and presenter of prayers. The fuller presentation of the Holy Spirit is in the 10th chapter, where he appears

with Divine symbolism, and there is an indication of the work of inspiration.

The Divine method of instruction is exemplified in 1 Peter iii. 19, the Spirit preaching through Noah, and the Divine method working otherwise by the building of the ark, and the coming on of the flood to warn and drive men to repentance.

In every circle of society, take it socially or geographically, there is to be found every grade of enlightenment or darkness to be dealt with by the Holy Spirit's merciful influence.

There is forced upon every individual the choice of repentance or rebellion, the seeking after more light, or the refusal because of some loved sin. It is to be understood that if the higher gospel light comes in, the responsibility is the greater.

The visions in this chapter are of mercy and judgment. Psalm lxxxix. 2—"Mercy shall be built up for ever. Thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens;" and 14th verse—"Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne. Mercy and truth shall go before thy face: blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

The first scene which shows seven angels, to. whom were given seven trumpets, also includes the angel who stood before the altar.

VERSE 13. And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

13th verse.—The flying eagle (\$\alpha\$=700) who announces the woes, bears the same name as the fourth living creature who heralds the fourth seal which exhibited Christ's power over death and Hades. Here the eagle gives a warning cry. The woes in the Gospels are warning cries showing the neglect of privileges, as in Matt. xi. 21—"Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."

In the 12th chapter the woman is given the wings of a great eagle, by which she flies to a place of safety. Exod. xix. 4—"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle's wings and brought you to myself."

Scriptural allusions to the eagle sing of mercy as well as judgment, and this view is clearly brought out in the seventh or third woe trumpet.

CHAPTER IX.

VERSES 1-12. And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God on their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

The Fifth Trumpet is an exhibition of Satanic power and agency, let out of the abyss by a messenger from heaven, by whom they are afterwards shut up again. The ideas most prominent are the vast numbers as locusts, and injurious as scorpions, powerful and plausible, having the faces of men and the hair of women. 2 Cor. xi. 14—" For Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light"—with teeth like lions showing cruelty. The limitation of power to five months is a natural one, carrying out the analogy of locusts which last five months, being hatched in April and dying in September. The termination

of Satanic power is afterwards described in the 20th chapter.

Their commission is to torment men till they desire death. Such a working of moral mischief is well described in 2 Tim. iii.—"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy," &c.

There are instances of such powers being committed to Satan. In 1 Cor. v. 5, there is a commission to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. The book of Job supplies testimony of the limited power given to Satan to torment, and there are many instances in the Gospels, as Luke xiii. 16—"And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond."

Introduction to Sixth Trumpet.

13th verse.—With a view to ascertaining the full import of the Sixth Trumpet, it will be of service to fix as far as possible the nature of the symbolism, the characters of the actors, and the meaning of the periods of time referred to.

The nature of the symbolism.—The opening of this vision directs the mind at once to events which occurred on the banks of the river Euphrates, the most remarkable of which were those incidental to the Jewish captivity. The warning prophecies which preceded the Babylonish captivity, the overwhelming and destructive army of Nebuchadnezzar, the destruction of Jerusalem, the wonders exceeding those of Egypt wrought upon the Babylonish kings into whose hearts God put the fulfilling of his will by most wonderful miracles; and the rebuilding of the temple with Samaritan interference (Ezra iv. 7), and ultimately the destruction of Babylon (Jer. chapter li.), supply an analogy of places, scenes, acts, and language, which leave no doubt where the key to this trumpet and the chapters episodic to the trumpets is to be found.

As there is a contrast between Babylon and Zion, Jer. li. 35—" The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say: and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say," so in the 18th and 21st chapters have we the same. description of the fall of Babylon is made up of parallels from the prophecies of Isaiah, Joel, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah.

As the army of Nebuchadnezzar was brought against Jerusalem for the sins and idolatries of the Jews (Ezek. 6th chapter), so the army of two hundred millions indicates the punishment by spiritual agencies of the enemies of Christ, and this after the admonitions of the first four trumpets, as Nebuchadnezzar's invasion was preceded by the pleadings of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Habakkuk. There are other evidences of this force. Christ said (Matt. xxvi. 53)—"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Dan. vii. 10—"Thousands and thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." 2 Kings vi. 16, 17—"And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." Heb. i. 14—" Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

By the four angels of the river Euphrates, who

correspond with the four cherubim seen by Ezekiel near the river Chebar, may be understood that universal Divine power evinced in connection with Babylon, more particularly in the prophets of the period of the Jewish captivity, of which such a large portion of the Old Testament is composed.

The description of the mighty angel in the 10th chapter agrees with the appearance of the glory of God in Ezek. i. 28, Dan. x. 5. His solemn declaration agrees with the record of Daniel, chapter xii. 7. The little book given to John is similar to the roll given to Ezekiel. The description of the two olive trees and the two candlesticks have their counterpart in Zech. iv. 11, 14—Zechariah having one lamp and two trees, one on each side. The prophetic days are equivalent to the period. Dan. ix. 27.

"The mighty angel clothed with the emblems of Divine majesty, the cloud and the rainbow, which Ezekiel informs us (chap. i. 28) is the likeness of the glory of God, is suggestive of only one personage. There is only one entitled to the name of the mighty Divine ministering spirit, and that is the Holy Ghost, the comforter. His power is over sea and land. His communications have a

Divine co-operation. His prophetic declarations have the authority of a Divine style, and are similar to the expressions in Psalm xcv. 11, expounded by St Paul, Heb. iii. 7—"Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith," &c., "so I sware in my wrath."

He sware by him that liveth for ever and ever. Now God swears by himself, and none but a Divine person could presume to act thus.

He instructs John as to his future, teaches him, and says afterwards: "I will give my power to my two witnesses." It may be assumed that there is here an exposition of the co-operation of the Holy Spirit in matters relative to the church.

The two witnesses.

- I. The period of their testimony is the fortytwo month period.
 - II. Their attire is that of mourners.
- III. They are spiritually described as the two olive trees and two candlesticks standing before the God of the whole earth.

Referring to Ezek. chap. iv., the same emblems are used as indicative of the influence of the Holy Spirit working through secondary means in the reconstruction of the temple.

IV. They have a special Divine protection and power.

V. Ultimately they are to die under the influence of Satanic malignity.

VI. In a world symbolised by countries representing sin and oppression, they are to be treated with contumely and degradation by a series of human races who have one characteristic, that of hating the witnesses.

VII. After a three days and a half period, they are to be revived and to ascend to heaven.

VIII. What is the testimony of Jesus Christ?

His incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension. Of these he and his apostles testified, as also do the sacraments of the supper and baptism.

Leaving the definition of the forty-two month period to be treated of separately, it may be taken up to compare the several acts done during it.

The witnesses were to prophesy in sackcloth 1260 days; the woman was to be fed (chap. xii.) in the wilderness 1260 days. For a similar time she was to be nourished from the face of the serpent in the wilderness, the woman's seed being those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

In the 13th chapter, the power permitted to the Beast for forty-two months enabled him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, as we find in chapter xi. 7; and power to the Beast over all kindreds and tongues and nations, and all who dwell on the earth who were to worship him, excepting those whose names are written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain, from the foundations of the world, as in chapter xiii. 7.

The forty-two month period identifies the witnesses with the saints whose names are in the Lamb's Book of Life and the seed of the woman who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

"I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The witnesses have the spirit of prophecy (chapter xi. 3-6).

The third point directs attention to the holy place in the temple, and it is worthy of notice that the references in this trumpet are to temple symbols alone.

1 The voice introducing this trumpet was from the horns of the golden altar.

John is told to measure the temple and the altar, leaving out the court.

Here is reference to the golden candlestick and the oil.

The doxology in the seventh trumpet, which seems a consummation of the sixth, is given by the twenty-four elders who perform priestly offices; and then there is the exposition of the ark of the testimony. From the witnesses being described as two olive trees and the two candlesticks, and the general reference to that portion of the temple to which priests only had access, also the conspicuousness of the witnesses on the earth for Divine grace and service, their human sufferings and heavenly honours; and looking at this part of the vision being consequent to John's appropriating the little book, and being told that he was to prophesy again, and his taking an active part in the measuring of the temple, it appears a natural deduction that if it be not a representation of the contents of the little book, at least it would represent to John an abstract of his own futurity which would coincide with his Lord's teaching in Matt. x. and Matt. xxiv. 9-" Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake;" while it may be applicable to martyrs in all ages, and in an inferior degree to the elect generally.

The number two, while it is limited to the

symbols the candlesticks and olive trees, appears to denote sufficiency of evidence, and not number two absolutely, from the ubiquitous character of the witnesses.

Conspicuous witnesses have appeared by twos. In the Old Testament there are Moses and Aaron and others; and in the New Testament, when our Lord (Mark vi. 7) sent his apostles to preach repentance, he sent them two by two. He commanded the simplest clothing to be used. He gave them miraculous powers, and intimated that it would be more tolerable for those cities which were destroyed by fire than for those who should reject them.

Fourth and fifth points. The witnesses are stated to be made war upon, to be overcome and killed by the Beast out of the abyss. In the 12th chapter he makes war with the saints and overcomes them, and in the 20th chapter he makes war upon the saints.

The forty-two month period. Under this head may be included 42 months and their equivalents 1260 days, and time, times, and a half.

The prophetic period here alluded to extends from the commission of the witnesses till their death shortly previous to the sounding of the seventh trumpet. This accords with other concurrent prophecies.

There is but one prophetic period beginning with the destruction of Jerusalem, and ending with the second coming of Christ; beginning with the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel ix. 27, and ending with the restitution of all things, Acts iii. 21. This is so marked in the prophecy of our Lord as recorded, Matthew xxiv. 15-30, Mark xiii. 14-26, and Luke xxi. 21-27, as to suggest the idea that the period would not be a long one, and that it is necessary to keep up a constant watchfulness in prayer urged in the gospels and in Rev. xvi. 15.

The half week of years, that is three years and a half, $\frac{7}{2}$, spoken of by Daniel, as referred to above, appears to be symbolic of one view of the forty-two month period. It is the period of the dispersion of the Jews. As corroborative of this view there are the following, Daniel xii. 7—"And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."

See also God's covenant with the Jews, Deut. xxviii. 62, and following verses referring to the dispersion of the Jews. A definiteness is given to the forty-two month period by comparing Rev. xi. 2, and Luke xxi. 24, where it is stated that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

While what is stated above may explain an historical period, there appears also a personal period, a period symbolised by the days of Christ's ministry, extending to about three years and a half, and the days of his deepest humiliation, those of his apprehension, death, and burial, till after he met Mary Magdalene, John xx. 17, representing about three days and a half.

These are applicable to the elect. See Christ's address to his disciples, Matt. x. 16th verse to the end, especially verses 16, 20, 22, 24, 28. Compare with 2 Peter i. 14—"Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."

There was in John xxi. 18, 19 a special prophecy made to Peter as to the manner of his death, which was the more intelligible because it was made after the resurrection and after the disciple had seen the manner of Christ's death.

What is the testimony of Jesus Christ and what the witnessing?

The testimony of Jesus Christ or that seal by which he owns his people is the spirit of prophecy.

As to the witnessing. After Christ's resurrection there is to be noticed a matter about which he and his disciples were most solicitous, that is the witnessing of Christ's resurrection. Luke xxiv. 4. The angels at the tomb preached this fact. Christ lays emphasis on it. Luke xxiv. 46-48.—"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things."

John xv. 26, 27.—"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."

Acts i. 8.—"But ye shall receive power, after

that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. These were Christ's last words before his ascension. Paul also, in Acts xxvi. 16, declares before Agrippa that in the vision of his conversion Christ chose him for a witness, and in the Acts ii., when Peter, after the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, preached Christ, he stated this Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. See also Acts x. 38 and xxii. 15. Rev. xx. 4-6. "And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Matt. xxiv. 14—"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." This witnessing then is the basis of the new church, an institution by Christ as symbolised by the priest's ministrations and the candlesticks with the oil.

THE SIXTH TRUMPET.

VERSE 12. One woe is past and behold there come two woes more.

There is no inherent reason in this passage to

lead to the supposition that the word "past" has an historical meaning. It appears simply to mark a division in the series of representations only.

VERSE 13. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God.

This appears to be the voice of the angel mentioned in chapter viii. 3, who offered incense with the prayers of saints, the chief ruling person in the trumpet visions, and who is Christ. He is still at the golden altar.

Verse 14. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

This order suggests a repetition of those dealings in the church and the world which were antitypically enacted in Jerusalem and Babylon as recorded by Ezekiel more particularly. The number four, as in the 7th chap. 1, 2, gives the commission a world-wide range.

It seems a commencement of those prophecies in the Ps. lxxii. and Zechariah ix. 10. "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust."

Verses 15-21. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men, which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

The powerful army of two hundred millions which works under the four angels, while it forms

a contrast to the army of Apollyon, which has power to torment men till they should desire death, is still a woe, but it is a woe with mercy. While it is a woe that kills the third part of men there is room for repentance, and this appears not only from the remarks in the 20th and 21st verses—"that the rest of the men repented not but after further dealings;" chap. xi. 13—"and the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of Heaven."

The men who repented not persist in a worship repugnant to common sense of the lowest orders, as it is only a worship of the works of their own hands, but which can neither hear, see, nor walk. It is a worship of devils, and shows its fruits in a low morality, the sins referred to being simply transgressions of the two tables of the law.

This army has its ordained work and times of working. It is a punitive power, prompt, prepared for an hour, and irresistible from its numbers and destructive capacity. It is under orders, as the Israelites were (Numbers ix. 22), to move for an hour, a day, a month, a year.

An army of two hundred millions, prepared for an hour, gives an idea of promptitude testing to the utmost the powers of human comprehension of the Divine omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence.

It is noticeable that the horsemen are not the means of destruction, but they guide them. It is from the mouths of the horses that the death-dealing poison comes; an angelic agency conducting under orders secondary means—direct as from mouths, indirect or subtle as from tails like serpents. The death implies a hopeless death. It is a punishment for sins, and the characteristic causes of death are the eternal torments, a fore-taste of future miseries.

CHAPTER X.

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven

thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

There can be little doubt who this mighty angel, clothed with the emblems of divine majesty, is. The covenant with every living creature of all flesh is symbolised by the bow in the cloud. Rev.

iv. 3; Gen. ix. 14, 15, 16. In Ezekiel i. 28, this combination is said to be the likeness of the glory of the Lord; the other parts resemble Rev. i. 15—"His feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace."

Verse 2. "And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and he cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices." Psalm lxxvii. 18-20—"The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron."

One of the Divine persons is here. Taking the duties performed and comparing them with the duties performed as recorded, Ezek. i. 28, and adding the passage in Psalm xcv. 11, as expounded by St Paul in Heb. iii. 7—"Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts . . . so I sware in my wrath," and Heb. xi. 17—"Wherein God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel,

confirmed it by an oath," and observing the transition by the communication of the roll to historic indications, and the commission to John to prophesy, and the self-assertion in chap. xi. 3—"And I will give power to my two witnesses," there is suggested that combination of our Lord and the Holy Spirit in which the latter comes in as a necessary element, a connecting and directing influence, by the perception of which this chapter and the next seem naturally to glide into each other.

The employing of the word angel gives a grand significance. Angels are ministering spirits, and who is entitled to the character of a mighty angel with Divine emblems, in a higher degree than the Comforter? The accompanying seven thunders giving a special revelation to John, which by a co-operating voice from heaven he is forbidden to communicate; strengthen the idea of the representation of the Holy Spirit here.

The co-operation of the Holy Ghost falls to be considered.

The first four trumpets specially referring to physical acts, the fifth to Satanic agency, the sixth to heavenly powers, there is a dealing with St John and the church, a prophetic co-operation which fits in here. Acts v. 31, 32—"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

The circumstances of this chapter resemble closely the prophet Daniel's vision of the latter days.

The little book being John's commission conferred by the Holy Ghost in conjunction with Christ, the voice from heaven shows not only symbolically the method of inspiration, but it goes far to keep up the unity of the pre-Christian and Christian prophecy, which not only the analogy of this trumpet with the Old Testament prophets, but which also the seventh verse declares—"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished as He hath declared to His servants the prophets." Gen. xlix. 10; Psalm ii. 6, 12; Daniel ii. 44.; iv. 3, 34; Luke i. 32; 1 Cor. xv. 51; Rev. xi. 15.

There is a revelation which is guarded, proving the absolute retention in God's hands of the disposal of events, of which the Spirit is cognisant. It is expressed in terms of awful solemnity and grandeur fitting the Divine majesty of the speaker, and will not be revealed till the mystery of God is finished. It is a complete foreclosing of any human chronological theories.

The experience of Paul as recorded, Acts xx. 23, 24, accords with the sweetness and bitterness felt by John on the appropriation of his commission—"Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy."

CHAPTER XI.

Verses 1-4. And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

Verse 1. The spiritual instructor directs John to measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

There is here a reconstruction of the church, a preserved and protected nucleus.

The measuring indicates, as in Zech. ii., God's promise to be a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of her; the protected and preserved part being a place of worship, that part of the furniture representative of intercessory prayer, and divine light, and the worshippers.

Verse 2. The court and altar of burnt-offering contained in it. First, the Holy City (Matt. xxvii. 53), Jerusalem, with its specialty as the place of worship, was to be destroyed and that condition instituted which was foretold. John iv. 21-24—"Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit

and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

It may be noticed in passing that Jerusalem is not measured till it is restored in its state of heavenly purification and perfection, the Holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God (Rev. xxi. 10 and 15), after the restitution or re-creation of all things after the 1000 years. Rev. xxi. 1, 5—" Behold I make all things new."

Verses 3 and 4. From this may be understood that the forty-two-month symbolic period will last till the restitution of all things, and the Christian ordinance of the two witnesses who take the place in the Christian Church of the candlestick and the olive oil of the old temple, or, as in Zech. iv. 11, a parallel of this passage, where is to be seen a symbol of the direct infusion of living oil into the candlestick, are to prophesy for the same time. The witnesses being clothed in sack-cloth may find its interpretation in Matt. ix. 15—"But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast," theirs being the condition of mourning an absent lord.

John i. 4 says of the word—" In him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Acts xiii. 47—"I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." Christ says of his disciples, Matt. v. 14—"Ye are the light of the world." In Rev. i. 20, it is explained that a candlestick is a church. The nature and work of witnesses are evidently the means and spread of the Gospel.

The great testimony of Jesus Christ. 1 Tim. iii. 16—"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." The power is given by him, the oil being his Holy Spirit imparted to his church.

In a perfect state of holiness. See Rev. vii. 15
—"Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple."

Verses 5, 6. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have

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power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

Verses 5 and 6 may be taken as that protection represented by measuring in the first verse—"And if any man shall hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth."

That there will be a fiery destruction of the enemies of the Gospel ultimately is strongly expressed in 2 Thess. i. 6-10—"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." See also Rev. xx. 9. Fire came down from heaven and destroyed them. Mark vi. 11-"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust

under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city."

Considering that the fire proceeding out of the witnesses may be judgments in answers to prayers, there is a strong case. James v. 16, 17—"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."

Matt. xviii. 19—"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

John xiv. 13, 14—"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

That the destruction of the enemies of the witnesses refers chiefly to their ultimate discomfiture may be assumed on the following grounds, not only from Rev. vi. 11, where, in answer to

the cry for vengeance from beneath the altar, the souls are told to wait till the number of the saints shall be complete, but in this chapter their enemies killed them and rejoiced over their death, and no vengeance seems to have followed. John xvi. 20—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

After their ascension, certain physical acts similar to the first four trumpets, of a convincing character, are stated to have been exhibited, and these were followed quickly with that outburst of praise in the seventh trumpet, which seems to be a fulfilment of the longings of the souls under the altar.

This is in keeping with the 20th chap., where judgment is given to those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and where on the loosing of Satan he is represented as gathering the nations and attacking the camp of the saints when fire came down out of heaven and devoured them, and he was cast into the lake of fire.

Generally, verses 5 and 6 may be taken as showing the power of earnest, fervent prayer,

illustrated by the powers given to Moses and Elias.

VERSES 7-10. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

Matt. xxiv. 9-14 gives a parallel to the 7th, 9th, and 10th verses—"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the

world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

The 8th verse has its parallel in Heb. xiii. 12, 13 —"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."

2 Tim. ii. 12—" If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him: If we deny him, he also will deny us."

The similarity of Jesus' life to that of his disciples is taught, Matt. x. 14 to the end. not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. It is enough that the disciple be as his master. He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me.

The 9th verse has a parallel in the 79th Psalm—"O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem in heaps. The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and there was none to bury them."

VERSE 11. And after three days and an

half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

The similarity betwixt the experience of Christ on earth and that of his disciples, as shown in this passage, appears to be carried out, as was shown in the separate explanation of the periods, the three days and a half being about the duration of Christ's deepest humiliation, that is, from the agony in the garden till after he met Mary Magdalen. John xx. 17.

The allusion to the crucifixion of our Lord, the similar fear attending the resurrection of Christ, the approximation, first, of the ministry of Christ and the testimony of the witnesses, and secondly, the continuance under death of our Lord and the witnesses, together with their ascension, seem to point to individual experiences.

The large cycle being made up of small cycles of the same character, the experience of the Christian Church being the experience of the individual members, and the individual members' experience being as our Lord's.

VERSE 12. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

The ascent to heaven seems to refer to the first resurrection, as in the 20th chapter; but there is involved an individual experience, for in the scene there is an accumulation of ages.

The ascension was similar. Acts i. 9. He was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight; and the experience of the saints is according to the promises:—"Blessed is the man who endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (James i. 12); and Rev. ii. 10—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that overcometh shall not be hurt by the second death."

Though there is a word of comfort here to the church, this verse must be taken as a part of the prophetic method, a moral influence, a part of the same teaching, as in the 13th verse.

Verse 13. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

The teaching of the parable of the Supper explains the position. The invitations of the

gospels by the witnesses have been rejected, the candlesticks removed; and now, as the scene is laid in the great city, the wide world, physical power is employed; as it were, messengers are sent to the highways and hedges to compel men to come in. Earthquake and devastation, instruments showing the long-suffering of God, operate on the fears of men, and cause them, or some of them, to give glory to the God of heaven when the teaching of the prophets failed.

It is interesting to study the 2nd and 3rd chapters of Revelation in connection with this passage; see also Ps. lxvi. 3—"Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee."

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET.

The former part of this chapter being taken as the invitation to the Supper, the seventh trumpet agrees with the fulfilment of the prayers of the saints under the altar, and the ultimate rejoicing of those called to the marriage supper of the Lamb in chapter xix.

VERSES 14-19. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail

Compare with 19th chapter, 6th verse-"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of many thunderings, saying, Alieluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

The number of the elect is complete; the prayer of the saints is about to be answered; the reward of every man according to his works to be given; those who are not justified by belief in Christ are to be arraigned under the law of Moses. Acts xiii. 38. The ark of the testimony, which latterly contained only the tables of the law, is opened with the terrors of an offended judge and the imprecations of a persecuted church.

Verse 19. The exposition of the most holy place with the ark of God's testament or covenant is strongly indicative of the purport of the trumpet visions. Ps. xxv. 10—"All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies."

Ps. cv. 17-19—"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them. The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all."

The judgments seem more brought out in the opening of "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven" (chap. xv. 5), from which place the angels with the vials proceed.

In looking back over the Divine method, as shown in the trumpet scenes, of dealing with a

world at enmity to God, it is noticeable that physical agencies and inspired teaching are both exhibited.

The censer, the emblem of prayer, is combined with the physical terrors of world-wide extent (four angels), as showing their object that men may be aroused and call on the name of the Lord.

—"And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." And Ps. cvii.

Here is an exhibition of spiritual agencies, evil and good, the four angels of the river Euphrates giving a world-wide force to the lessons of the Babylonish captivity, an idea which is supported by the frequent use of the language of the prophets of that period made in subsequent parts of this book.

Then there is the gift of divine inspiration, accompanied by a vision of the temple, an altar of incense excluding the outer court and altar of burnt offering, which is superseded by the offering of the body of Jesus.

Then Christ's witnesses, priestly and prophetic, the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, with prophetic powers, their life and death similar to Christ's, their removal and a short physical dealing, and finally the triumph of the servants of God, and the last exhibition of the contents of the temple, showing the test of the law bearing on those who are not justified by faith.

The ninth and eleventh chapters both agree with what Paul writes. Rom. ii. 12, 16—"For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law: in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."

CHAPTER XII.

Verses 1-5. And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his

heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

This chapter, in which the principal characters are a woman who gave birth to a man child and whose seed are those who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, and the old serpent who is set in opposition to her, suggests a symbolization of the first prophecy. Gen. iii. 15—" And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; and it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

It appears from her giving birth to such an one as the 2nd Psalm 9th verse describes, and the remnant of her seed being the saints (17th verse), that this symbolic woman is the body of the elect. She is distinguished by heavenly lights, and the dragon who, we are told (9th verse), is that old serpent called the devil and Satan, is characterized by worldly powers, crowns and horns, with a following of stars, which are his angels.

"And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." Isaiah lxvi. 6, 7—"A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies. Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man-child"—gives God's answer to this earnest prayer in similar language. This earnest cry for deliverance is frequently expressed by "travailing." Rom. vii. 22—"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

The waiting for the Messiah, for the consolation of Israel should be considered in relation to the travailing, as the joy of Zacharias, Mary, and Simeon at the birth of Christ shows. Luke ii.

Verses 6-17. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels

were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saving in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ve heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

"And the woman fled into the wilderness,"

(compare with) "and to the woman were given two wings of a (or the) great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness."

Being carried to the wilderness or fleeing to the wilderness so far as a prepared place is referred to shows a Divine superintendence and providence till her rest be reached. The reference to the eagle and the wilderness recalls Exod. xix. 4-"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself."

The giving to the woman the wings of the great eagle to take her to the place of safety is not only using a simile which is easily understood, but it seems to be connected with the fourth living creature (Rev. vi. 7), who announced that portion of Christ's diploma where he has power over death and Hades, and which power he is here represented as in the face of the devil and his angels exerting for the protection of the church.

The woman was fed for 1260 days, and it seems these days last till the period of the great battle in the last times in which Michael leads the saints or fights for them with his angels, as we find in Daniel xii. and Rev. xx.

The fact that immediately after the child was caught up to God the woman went to the wilderness for 1260 days, and after the battle and rejoicing in heaven, and the casting of the dragon down to the earth, the woman was given the wings of the great eagle, and she flew into the wilderness for a similar period, time, times, and a half, where the devil persecuted her, shows that the enmity continues through the whole period of wilderness condition which extends to the end of the symbolic period or till the judgment.

The devil's persecution is represented by the casting of a flood after her, which taking the analogy of the Sinaitic desert, formerly assumed, was like throwing water on the sand, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood.

The place of opposition is now confined to the earth, and is now betwixt Satan and the remnant of the seed of the woman.

CHAPTER XIII.

Verses 1, 2. And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority."

Meditating on this passage the mind at once reverts to the vision of Daniel and its interpretation, which it may be well to examine with a view to understanding the full import of the chapter.

The combination of the lion, the leopard, and the bear is introduced into the prophecies prior to Daniel's time. In Proverbs xxviii. 15—"As a roaring lion and a raging bear, so is the wicked ruler over the poor people."

Lamentations iii. 10—"He was unto me as a bear lying in wait, and as a lion in secret places."

Hosea xiii. 7, 8—"Therefore will I be unto them as a lion, as a leopard by the way will I observe them. I will meet them as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the caul of their heart, and there will I devour them like a lion: the wild beast shall tear them."

Jeremiah v. 6—"Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their

cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased."

In Habakkuk the Chaldeans are compared to leopards as a punitive power against the people of God.

The four beasts are four kingdoms to arise after Daniel's time, and the ten horns, and the small one more stout than his fellows, are to proceed from the fourth kingdom.

- 1. The small horn is to subdue three kings. Dan. vii. 20.
- 2. 5th verse—To speak great things against the Most High.
- 3. 7th verse—To wear out the saints of the Most High.
 - 4. To think to change times and laws.
 - 5. Which will be given into his hands.
- 6. 5th verse—Until time, times, and the dividing of a time.
 - 7. 7th verse—He is to have a dominion.
- 8. Chap. xix. 20—Finally, his dominion is to be consumed. The judgment was set. Dan. vii. 10.

John's beast has the characteristics of Daniel's four beasts in an inverted order, which proves that they are not consecutive historical facts.

Daniel, 7th ch.—4 beasts. Here—1 beast.

A lion. 7 heads and 10

horns.

A bear. Leopard.

A leopard. Bear.

A beast with 10 horns. Lion.

In tracing the similarity betwixt Daniel's vision and John's in this chapter, there is seen in John's vision a beast, which in its individuality comprehends all the parts of Daniel's vision, the four beasts and the horns being represented in John's one beast, which in its powers and end resembles the little horn.

There is a significance in the beast being like a leopard, which from its having four heads in Daniel's vision, and from its being employed in the prophecy of Habakkuk as characteristic of the Chaldeans, may be taken as exhibiting Babylonish anti-Zion qualities. The heads crowned signify the directing power, the horns crowned, the acting force. The acting force is Babylon against the saints, as may be seen by the opposition of the 14th and 15th chapters, which opposition is maintained in the subsequent chapters. The 8th verse shows general apostasy, the 10th verse, that the victory of the saints is a bloodless victory.

The beast seen here has seven heads and ten horns. The dragon gave him his seat, power, and authority. He resembles the dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and he differs from the dragon in having his horns crowned, while the dragon's heads are crowned.

His special characteristics are that his power is on the earth. It is in regal form. It is for the forty-two month period, that is, the whole Christian era.

War, persecution, and blasphemies are his works, and generally he is represented in appearance partly like a lion, a leopard, and a bear, which represent the first three anti-Zion powers in Daniel's vision. He stands in the position of Antichrist, as Babylon and others did against Zion.

He receives the homage of all the earth excepting those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

This beast may be taken as an exhibition of Satan's power working through civil means, affecting civil liberty, and calling for the patience of the saints recommended here.

Verse 10.—"He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword."

Matt. xxvi. 52—"Then saith Jesus unto him, Put up thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Luke xxi. 19—"In patience possess your souls." 2 Thess. iii. 5—"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." And Rev. xiv. 12—"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

In reference to the word Antichrist it may be well to see what John, who alone uses the name, means by it. 1 John ii. 18, 22—"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."

1 John iv. 3—"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come: and even now already is it in the world."

2 John 7—"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

If it be established, as has been attempted to be proved above, that the beast is representative of Babylonish supremacy, and that its supremacy was of a universal caste, its authority opposed to Zion's authority, and its gods and worship opposed to Zion's God and worship, then the best way will be to follow out the works which were considered honouring to the beast, and to fix the nature and extent of their operation.

Verses 3, 4. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

This follows as a characteristic of the beast. It is a notable circumstance that the beast did receive a death blow to one of its characteristics of power and authority. Though Babylon is held up here as the name and great seat of apostacy, Babylon years before as a capital and centre of authority and priestcraft was utterly destroyed, and so wounded to death. But we find in chap. ii. 12, 14 (church in Pergamum), such a revival of power, authority and malignity, as to suggest

that the apostasy and false teaching were of the old character and nothing impaired.

The very fact of the reconstitution of Babylonish mysteries in their entirety would, in the boasting language of heathen idolatry, result naturally in such an ascription of praise to their idol as is here supplied.

Blasphemy is the great distinctive quality, but the characteristic of this earliest form of apostasy is warfare, a confining of the bodies and souls of men under an absolute despotism, such as we have an instance of in the 3rd chapter of Daniel, and in Rev. xix. 19—by the whole opposing force of the world, the beast, and the kings of the earth and their armies.

Now this crushing despotism was sufficiently felt in John's time and experience, and to John is committed the prophetic message for his own and others' comfort in the tenth verse.

> Verse 10. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints

And Titus ii. 13—"Looking for that blessed

hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

> VERSES 11 to 18. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and caused the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saving to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all. both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

In chapter xix. 20, this appears to be called the false prophet.

In Matt. xxiv. 24—" For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

The appearance of the Lamb seems a symbolising of this passage from Matthew. The first idea suggested here is the characteristic of the Lamb subordinate to the first beast, but tributary to his influence, a mental control, a misdirecting influence called in to aid the influence of the first beast and support it, by using its power on all classes to continue the apostasy, and by binding and obliging them by threatened pains and penalties to oppose the truth, assuming the emblem of humility to deceive.

17th verse—The mark, name, number of the beast.

The mark, name, and number seem to be convertible terms.

The doxology, xv. 2, was by those who had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.

There is an evident opposition in the name of

the beast and the name of the father written in the foreheads of the opposite parties.

The church in Philadelphia (Rev. iii. 12) had the promise—" Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

Exod. xxxix. 30, the high priest's crown had a plate of pure gold, and on it was written like the engravings of a signet (ring), Holiness to the Lord.

The contrast is strongly expressed in chapter xiv. 8, 11, in opposition to the previous verses. In the 17th chapter, referring to the scarlet coloured beast and the woman in scarlet, the beast has the seven heads and ten horns of the first beast on whose head was written blasphemy, and it is full of the names of blasphemy, and the woman has upon her forehead a name written "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and the Abominations of the Earth."

The universality of the name—and a name in the Bible means a description of a character—is to be seen in the 18th chapter, where, after describing Babylon in words elsewhere applied to Nineveh, Tyre, and Babylon as opposed to Zion, the chapter is wound up in the 24th verse—"And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

The application of the word harlot is in opposition to the bride, the Lamb's wife—the new Jerusalem—on account of an unfaithfulness in idolatry and sin. This is the common meaning in the Old Testament. Exod. xxxiv. 15, or Ezek. vi. 9.

The tracing of a specialty in the number 666 is as unnecessary as the tracing of 144,000, as we know the nature and extent of it.*

^{*} Early authors made up the number 666 from the Greek numerals indicated by the letters of the word Lateinos.

In Hislop's two Babylons the preference is given to the word Saturn = Nimrod = mystery in Chaldee.

Saturn, the hidden God, pronounced Satūr, written Stūr. S = 60, T = 400, U = 6, R = 200. In all, 666.

An ingenious guess is χ -S, the monogram of Christ, with the serpentine sibilant ξ chsi in the middle, thus $\chi \xi$ S, for which 666 is an exact numerical rendering. There is a curious coincidence in the figures 6 | 144,000

^{6 | 24,000 | 666}

We have thus the mark of the beast. It is on all those whose names are not written in the Book of Life, and who are in a state of apostasy in thoughts, words, and works; that is, the mark is on the forehead and hands, and the verbal characteristic is blasphemy.

CHAPTER XIV.

As there is in the 13th chapter a representation of Devil worship, his vicegerents on earth or his image, that is a mental submission and external worship in different forms, so in this chapter we have a representation of the kingdom of God, not of this earth, but operating on this earth.

The marked antithesis presented by the 13th and 14th chapters, suggests the propriety of seeking for the full force of the 14th chapter by the aid of opposite parallels which the successive parts of these two chapters afford.

CHAP, XIII. VERSES 1-3. And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the

CHAP. XIV. VERSE 1. And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an sea, having seven heads hundred forty and four

and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

thousand, having Father's name written in their foreheads

In the first three verses of the 13th chapter there is a symbolic characteristic of Babylon—on its heads the name of blasphemy.

In the first verse of the 14th chapter there is the direct opposite in the Lamb on Mount Sion with the Father's name on the foreheads of the 144,000. The rebellious opposed to the faithful.

CHAP. XIII. VERSES 4-6. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, say-

Chap. XIV. Verses 2-5. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: ing. Who is like unto the heast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

These quotations show in the worship of the beast, which was of a filthy form, the boastful clamour of men, and the blasphemy against God, his name, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven, in opposition to the heavenly space, being full of the sound of divine praises from Mount Sion to the throne of God.

In the mouths of the faithful there is no guile, and in their history and condition no defilement. The opposition agrees with chap. xxi, 7, 8, and chap. xxii. 11.

CHAP. XIII. VERSES 7, 8. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

CHAP. XIV. VERSES 6-11. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man wor-

ship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead. or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God. which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the . presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

Here is a world-wide permission to exercise a rebellious opposition to the truth by force, and to persecute those who maintain the truth, but on this dark side of the horizon there is a principle, there is an avenging judge opposed, there is a divine system of instruction world-wide also, a special dealing with special error, a distinct decision on the ultimate result of rebellion. These

two parts are respectively followed by a very marked similar expression, "Here is the patience and faith of the saints."

CHAP. XIII. VERSES 9, 10. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

CHAP. XIII. VERSE 16. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads.

CHAP. XIV. VERSES 12

13. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

CHAP. XIV. VERSE 9. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand.

Exodus xiii. 9—"And it shall be a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes;" and Isaiah xlix. 16—"Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." Reference is made in these passages to distinctive religious marks, such as the Hindoos have to this day as caste distinctions.

Verse 13. After pointing out patience as the Christian duty under oppression, in the 13th chapter, verse 10, here steadiness is urged, while retribution is being administered, and the consolation is added—"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

Eccles. iv. 1, 2—"So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive." So the preacher wrote, but here is a direct voice from heaven, with a concurrent verification by the Spirit. Write, says the voice, for the benefit of future generations. I confirm that truth, says the Holy Spirit.

Verse 14. And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

In Daniel's vision, vii. 13, the majesty of the

Son of man was surrounded with the clouds of heaven. Luke xxi. 27—"And then shall ye see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Acts i. 9, 11-"And a cloud received him out of their sight. This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Rev. i. 7—" Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." The Son of man has on a golden crown, another sign of majesty, and in his hand a sharp sickle; and (Levit. xxvi. 5) "your threshing floor shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time." First is the general harvest. In Jeremiah li. 33, Babylon is compared to a threshing floor.

> Verses 15-18. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and

gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

Reference may here be made to the 11th chapter, verse 19, where it is said in the temple were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail. After a series of voices from heaven, there are voices from the temple. These were the voices of harpers. There was the voice of an angel flying through mid-heaven proclaiming an eternal gospel. Fear God, and give glory to him. Another voice of an angel following the last, saying, Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great. Another angel with a great voice warning the worshippers of the beast. Another voice from heaven, saying, Blessed are the dead; and then follow two angels from the temple with loud voices, and one bearing a sickle. These have messages of special sacredness. One directs the Son of man to reap the general harvest, and another calls upon the angel with the sickle to gather the clusters of the vine of the earth. The general harvest has been delayed. It is over ripe. The vintage time has come. The grapes also are fully ripe, so the hour beyond which there is no delay is come. Two angels come out of the temple in heaven, one of whom is from the altar.

Here are angels, remembrancers, specially directing the answers to the prayers of the souls under the altar in the fifth seal, in harmony with the doxology in the seventh trumpet led by the twentyfour elders, chap. xi. 15.

Joel iii. 13 accuses Tyre and Zidon, and calls on the Lord to cause his mighty ones to "put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come ye down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great."

Verses 19, 20. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

Winepresses were always outside cities, so that the special allusion is significant of the crucifixion and victory over death.

In Rev. xix. 13, the triumphant Lamb was clothed in a vesture dipped in or sprinkled with blood, and his name is called the Word of God, and he treadeth the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God. Isaiah lxiii. 2-4—"Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments

like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." Heb. xiii. 12—"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Refering to Joel, the press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great. The measure here is enormous. The overflow for 1600 furlongs = 200 miles. The depth, the horses swimming in the blood. The riders' vesture dipped in blood.

CHAPTER XV.

Verses 1-4. And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing

the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

The seer sees another sign, great and marvellous in heaven — seven angels having the seven last plagues.

One of these angels showed John the judgment of Babylon, chap. xvii. 1; and one in the 21st chapter, 9th verse, after the condemnation of the wicked, showed John the new Jerusalem.

The seven angels are in the temple. The redeemed are on the sea of glass, not now as of crystal only, but as it were mingled with fire. It may be significant of their sanctification. The laver suggests itself in connection with the 5th verse, where the temple is referred to, and the baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire occurs to one's mind, when the redeemed are found so situated as to unite in singing the praises of God and of the Lamb, with the exuberant joy of Moses and the Israelites, as in Exod. xv., Moses' song being combined with the 40th Psalm and Rev. v. 9, and xi. 16.

Verses 5-7. And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

The seven angels were dressed in pure white linen, emblematic of holiness. The one of the four living creatures was probably the fourth, the Eagle who announced the fourth seal, that is, Death and Hades, and who announced the three woe trumpets. Chap. viii. 13.

The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders had golden bowl-shaped vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints; such as the cry of the souls under the altar, in the fifth seal. So this fourth living creature may fitly be supposed to have supplied vials of the wrath of God in answer to the prayers of saints, and to have dealt out, in the presence of the company described in the second verse, the unmixed wine of the wrath of God mentioned. Chapter xiv. 10.

Hebrews x. 26, 27—" For if we sin wilfully

after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries"

> VERSE 8. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

The occupation of the temple by the symbolic cloud of the Divine presence. Exod. xl. and 1 Kings viii. 10, 11—"And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord," shows the direct method of Divine superintendence in all the dealings narrated here, while secondary instruments are commissioned to act.

The frequent references to the opening of the temple deserve notice.

In chap. vii. 15, the temple is a place of refuge where God dwells among his saints.

In chap. xi. 1, it is a place specially protected.

In chap. xi. 19, the Ark of the Covenant is exposed with terrible powers in reserve, reminding one of Psalm lxviii. 35—"O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God." And the 145th Psalm, where God's merciful kindness is praised—"men shall speak of thy terrible acts."

In chap. xiv. 15, one of the voices came out ordering the harvest to be reaped. And in this 15th chapter the angels with the seven plagues proceed from the temple, and after they left, the temple was exclusively occupied by the smoke from the glory of God, and a voice came out ordering the pouring out of the vials.

In the 17th verse of the 16th chapter—"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great"—these voices, lightnings, and earthquakes are Divine attributes acting judicially.

CHAPTER XVI.

Verses 1-16. And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments. And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth. and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

The commission from the temple to the seven angels to go and pour out the bowls or vials of the wrath of God upon the earth, though executed promptly by all, may be arranged thus—the angel of the earth, the angel of the sea, and the angel of the rivers. The bowls of these angels contained the wine of retributive justice in accordance with the prayers of saints under the altar in the fifth seal. And the doxology led by the

angel of the waters and the responding angel agrees with the prophetic doxology of the faithful in chapter xv. 3, 4.

The bowls, it might have been stated at first, were temple utensils, and stood on the table beside the shewbread, and probably were used to hold the blood for sprinkling purposes.

The bowls suggest a full measure in reference to wine (Amos vi. 6), referring to those at ease in Zion as being over luxurious and self-indulgent —"That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with chief ointments."

The persons acted upon may, in opposition to the temple, be called profane, those not only outside but opposed to the temple.

Vials 1, 2, 3.—The first three bowls having been poured on the earth, sea, and rivers, may refer to Babylon, Tyre, and Nineveh, as representatives of apostate persecutors. The Jews themselves when in apostasy were most guilty of the blood of saints and prophets. They are judged and make no reply. The blood given them to drink is the blood of dead men—putrid, decomposed, poisonous; as they sowed, so do they reap, or as is said in the 18th chapter, 6th verse-"Reward her even as she rewarded you, and

double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double."

75th Psalm, 8th verse—"For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them."

The next bowl, the fourth, shows strong strivings with the incorrigibly impenitent. A very clear parallel is to be found in 2 Chron. xxviii. 22, 23—"And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord: this is that king Ahaz. For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel."

Baal worship was sun worship; so their own god is turned against them, as it would seem to them.

The fifth bowl is more specific. The throne of the beast must be explained from this book alone, and this will fall to be dealt with in the episodic chapters which follow. The worshippers having the mark of the beast have the cumulative punishment of the first vial and this fifth vial. Pains and sores, to which are added judicial darkness and gnawing of their tongues for pain. Still they are impenitent.

The sixth vial represents the gathering of the kings of the East. The prophecies of Isaiah seem to afford parallels, 11th chapter, 15, 16—"And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind will he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it into seven streams, and make men go over dryshod. And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt."

Then if the 13th and 14th verses be paragraphed, there is a classification under the sixth seal, Rev. vi. 15; where the kings of the earth, and the great men and others, are discomfited by terrible physical changes, and the sixth trumpet, Rev. ix. 14. There is the punitive force against the impenitent under angelic guidance. Here the mighty impenitent of the earth are arrayed through Satanic persuasion in the battle of that great day of God Almighty. The unclean spirits

being likened to frogs suggests mean demons or mean ways of working different from those deceivers referred to in 2 Cor. xiii. 14, which might be mistaken for angels of light.

Verse 15. "Behold I come as a thief."

The faithful are cautioned, as in 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Cor. v. 3; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Matt. xxiv. 12. Eph. vi. 11, 12—"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

And they gathered them together into the place called in Hebrew Armageddon.

That the Hebrew name should be used specially is suggestive of Old Testament lessons: the controversy betwixt Elijah and the priests of Baal, devil worshippers, had in Carmel; the scenes with which Megiddo, Esdraelon, and the river Kishon were familiar, where also Deborah and Barak were victorious in the cause of truth, and where Josiah, so conspicuous for removing the abuses of idolatry all over the land, died, and left the traditions of Lamentations associated with the locality; also the records 1 Kings xiii. 2, 2 Kings

xxii. 23, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 35, and Zech. xii. 11, make this district pre-eminently suitable as a symbolic battle-field on which apostasy is finally vanquished. It is interesting that Nazareth, where the Lamb first assumed the human nature, and prepared for his victory over the devil, hell, and death, looks down southwards on the same historical landscape.

Verse 17. The seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done,

followed by terrible convulsions of the earth. Two episodic chapters follow, and then comes the end of apostasy.

CHAPTER XVII.

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither: I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-

coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINA-TIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints. and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world,) when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou

sawest, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

It seems advisable to take the 17th and 18th chapters and half of the 19th chapter together on account of the oneness of the subject and the relative explanation.

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials." One of the seven angels shows the judgment of the great whore, and one of the seven angels takes John apart and shows him the bride, the Lamb's wife. So these are set in opposition.

The epithet whore or harlot is frequently used in the Old Testament as applied to idolatry, not only on account of its alienating tendency, but on account of its sinful incidents, mercenariness, and abominations. Ezek. xvi. In Isaiah the name is specially given to Tyre. In Nahum, Nineveh is so characterized, and Babylon in this chapter is stigmatized as the Mother of Harlots. The 15th verse explains that the many waters referred to in the first verse in which the whore sitteth are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues

In the 12th chapter a great red dragon (the word dragon just means a serpent), otherwise that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, having seven heads and ten horns, persecuted the heaven-protected woman who brought forth the man-child, who was caught up to God and his throne. Here the same red-coloured beast, the arch-deceiver, full of the names of blasphemy, is represented as carrying a woman who is opposed to the woman who bore the man-child.

The woman carried by the beast is decked with meretricious jewelry, and holds a seductive cup of gold to intoxicate the inhabitants of the earth. And on her forehead was written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth. This is the opposite of the inscription on the high priest's mitre, Holiness to the Lord.

Though the vision was distinct to John, its application required explanation. He was astonished. To the reader now it is an allegory written in clearly legible characteristics on the forefront of apostasy in the shape of Babylonish, Assyrian, and Phœnician ceremonies and their accessories.

"And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus."

The beast seems to be the old serpent, and the woman the later Babylon, who sits on the Roman hills, or, as it is in the 18th verse—"The woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

The title which Pagan Rome first and Popish Rome afterwards have to be named here, is founded firstly on the local description of the seven hills, which is unique, and secondly, on her great power then and thereafter over the kings of the earth. The mysteries also borrowed from the East, the Tyrian dye so much used, the Dagon mitre, the Babylonish cross, the gilding, the precious stones and pearls in the robes which she copied or

continued to increase the pomp and circumstance of the pontifex maximus, make her a fit successor to Babylon, Tyre, and Nineveh. And what may be said of Rome to this day in the way of blasphemous pretensions; the image of Jupiter, christened St Peter; the keys of Cybele and Janus, christened the keys of St Peter and heaven; the aureola (representing the sun's rays) decking the so-called saints; the auto da fé of the Holy Inquisition, with its Baal-like use of fire for the destruction of all opposed to Rome and her faith; the style, His Holiness the Pope, the vicar of Christ, and such arrogant designations?

The expression "decked with gold" means only superficial gilding; her array of stately cardinals and princes delighting in crimson and purple and scarlet, in order, so they say, "that Christ's priests should be in their pomp equal to the Pagan pontifex maximus (Baronius), so the pontifex maximus is christened. Such a hereditary opposition to the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus cannot leave the greatest waverer in doubt where to look for Babylon, since the Papacy superseded Paganism on the Roman throne, seat, or see. The presumption of the papacy is well described (2 Thess. ii.)—" Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming

of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Verse 10. "And there are seven kings" (or kingdoms). Probably these refer to the crowns on the heads of the beast. There is an eighth —the beast, who, though he is distinct, yet is involved with the seven individually, as in the case of the ten horns, which are kings who receive power conjointly with the beast—these war with the Lamb. Ps. lxxvi. 10—"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." The ten horns or kingdoms through conviction turn against the woman (17th verse), for God hath put it into their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree and give their kingdom unto the beast until the words of God shall be fulfilled. This plan is not yet completed, so it would be vain to try to fill in any part of the frame with patches of European history. While it is proper to keep the eyes open to current events, there is the danger to be avoided of over-estimating their importance.

CHAPTER XVIII.

There seems an opening of all the Scriptures relative to the destruction of apostasy. The quotations from Jeremiah and Ezekiel, referring to the extinction of Babylon, Tyre, and Zidon, are striking proofs.

Babylon, Tyre, Zidon, and Nineveh were extinct generations before the angel having great power and glory communicated this epic to John. The destruction of Tyre as prophesied, Ezekiel xxvii. 27, comes up to the destruction of Babylon in the 21st verse, and it would be equally inapplicable to Babylon or Rome but for the spiritual lessons, for the teaching of which the dooms of all these ancient cities are quoted as foreshadowing the final downthrow of that city or system whose princes, like those of Tyre of old, Ezekiel xxviii. 2, said, "I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God." It may be interesting before going further to lay the various references alongside of the text.

Verses 1, 2. And Ezek. XLIII. 2. And, beafter these things I saw hold, the glory of the God of

another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils. and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

JER. L. 39. Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

Isa. xxxiv. 11 - 15. the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the

Verses 4, 5. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.

Isa. xxi. 9. Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.

Jer. Li. 6 - 9. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence. Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies.

Num. xvi. 26. (Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.) And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of their's, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

GEN. XIX. 12, 13. And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place: for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.

GEN. XVIII. 20-22. And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence

Verse 6. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

VERSE 7. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived

and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.

ISA. XL. 1, 2. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

JER. XVII. 18. Let them be confounded that persecute me, but let not me be confounded: let them be dismayed, but let not me be.

Ps. cxxxvII. 8. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

Ps. LXXV. 8. For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red: it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.

EZEK. XXVII. 3. Thus saith the Lord God; O Tyrus, thou hast said, I am of perfect beauty.

deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

ISAIAH XLVII. 5. Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms.

Zeph. II. 15. This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand.

EZEK. XXVIII. 1-8. The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God: Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God: behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee: with thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, Verse 8. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures; by thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches: Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God: behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas.

FALL OF TYRE.

APOCALYPSE

for the fear of her by reason of the multitude torment, saying, Alas, of all kind of riches; with alas that great city silver, iron, tin, and lead, Babylon, that mighty they traded in thy fairs city! for in one hour Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, mitted fornication and walls round about, and the her, shall bewail her, towers: they hanged their and lament for her, shields upon thy walls the kings of the The men of Arvad with earth, who have com- thine army were upon thy when they shall see round about; they have ing, standing afar off Tarshish was thy merchant is thy judgment come, they were thy merchants: And the merchants of they traded the persons of and mourn over her; in thy market. They of VERSES 9-24, And EZEK, XXVII. 11-36. lived deliciously with Gammadims were in thy the smoke of her burn- made thy beauty perfect. the earth shall weep men and vessels of brass

at every moment, and be wast strong in the sea, she tway their robes, and put ments: they shall clothe hemselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble destroyed, that wast innabited of seafaring men, Then all the princes of the heir thrones, and lay off their broidered garastonished at thee. And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou the renowned city, which sea shall come down from EZEK. XXVI. 16 - 21

sity, like the cities that

are not inhabited; when I

shall bring up the deep

upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee; when I

Il that haunt it! Now

shall the isles tremble in

he day of thy fall; yea, he isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure. For thus saith the Lord God; When Ishall make thee a desolate

cause their terror to be on

and her inhabitants, which

for no man buyeth the house of Togarmah their merchandise any traded in thy fairs with more: the merchandise horses and horsemen and of gold, and silver, and mules. The men of Deden precious stones, and of were thy merchants; many pearls, and fine linen, isles were the merchandise and purple, and silk, of thine hand: theybrought and scarlet, and all thee for a present horns of thyine wood, and all ivory and ebony. Syria manner vessels of ivory, was thy merchant by reason and all manner vessels of the multitude of the of most precious wood, wares of thy making: they and of brass, and iron, occupied in thy fairs with and marble, and cinna- emeralds, purple, and mon, and odours, and broidered work, and fine

wheat, and beasts, and chants: they traded in thy they with feigned words time, and shall set thee in chariots, and slaves, and Pannag, and honey, whose judgment now of a in places desolate of old, shall bring thee down with 2 Peter II. 3. And them that descend into the oil, and fine flour, and Is.ael, they were thy mer- through covetousness shall pit, with the people of old sheep, and horses, and market wheat of Minnith, make merchandise of you; the low parts of the earth, incense, and wine, and Judah, and the land of ointments, and frank- linen, and coral, and agate.

EZEKIEL XXVI.

the fruits that thy soul cus was thy merchant in and their damnation slum- to the pit, that thou be and souls of men. And and oil, and balm. Damas- long time lingereth not, with them that go down 2 PETER. EZEKIEL XXVII.

lusted after are de- the multitude of the wares bereth not.

not inhabited; and I shall

dainty and goodly are the wine of Helbon, and me, O Tyre, and Zidon, and terror, and thou shalt be no departed from thee, white wool. Dan also and all the coasts of Palestine? more: though thou be and thou shalt find Javan going to and fro will ye render me a recom- sought for, yet shalt thou them no more at all. occupied in thy fairs: pence? and if ye recom- never be found again, saith JOEL III. 4-6. Yea, and set glory in the land of the all things which were multitude of all riches; in what have ye to do with living; I will make thee a The merchants of these bright iron, cassia, and pense me, swiftly and the Lord God. parted from thee, and of thy making, for the

stand afar off for the chant in precious clothes head; because ye have Lord came unto me, saying, was clothed in fine in these were they thy dren also of Judah and the God; Thou sealest up the with gold, and precious were thy merchants: they that ye might remove them hast been in Eden the things, which were calamus, were in thy mar- speedily will I return your EZEK. XXVIII. 11-19. made rich by her, shall ket. Dedan was thy mer- recompence upon your own Moreover the word of the fear of her torment, for chariots. Arabia, and taken my silver and my Son of man, take up a weeping and wailing, all the princes of Kedar, gold, and have carried into lamentation upon the king and saying, Alas, alas they occupied with thee in your temples my goodly of Tyrus, and say unto-that great city, that lambs, and rams, and goats: pleasant things: the chil- him, Thus saith the Lord linen, and purple, and merchants. The merchants children of Jerusalem have sum, full of wisdom, and scarlet, and decked of Sheba and Raamah, they ye sold unto the Grecians, perfect in beauty. Thou

Zech. IX. 3, 4. And cious stone was thy covernought. And every gold. Haran, and Canneh, strong hold, and heaped up the diamond, the beryl, the sailors, and as many as mad, were thy merchants. streets. Behold, the Lord the carbuncle, and gold: trade by sea, stood afar These were thy merchants will cast her out, and he the workmanship of thy garden of God; every pregreat riches is come to all precious stones, and Tyrus did build herself a ing, the sardius, topaz, and shipmaster, and all the and Eden, the merchants silver as the dust, and fine onyx, and the jasper, the company in ships, and of Sheba, Asshur, and Chil-gold as the mire of the sapphire, the emerald, and stones, and pearls! occupied in thy fairs with far from their border. For in one hour so chief of all spices, and with

saw the smoke of her blue clothes, and broidered the sea; and she shall be was prepared in thee in city is like unto this apparel, bound with cords, JER. LI. 60-64. So Jere- created. Thou art the burning, saying, What work, and in chests of rich devoured with fire.

great city! And they and made of cedar, among mish wrote in a book all anointed cherub that covcast dust on their thy merchandise. The the evil that should come ereth; and I have set thee heads, and cried, weep- ships of Tarshish did sing upon Babylon, even all so: thou wast upon the city, wherein were and made very glorious in And Jeremiah said to down in the midst of the made rich all that had the midst of the seas. Seraiah, When thou comest stones of fire. Thou wast ships in the sea by Thy rowers have brought to Babylon, and shalt see, perfect in thy ways from reason of her costli- thee into great waters: the and shalt read all these the day that thou wast Alas, alas that great and thou wast replenished, written against Babylon. thou hast walked up and ing and wailing, saying, of thee in thy market: these words that are holy mountain of God;

off, and cried when they in all sorts of things, in will smite her power in tabrets and of thy pipes

the day that thou wast

EZEKIEL XXVIII.

EZEKIEL XXVII.

JEREMIAH LI.

ness! for in one hour east wind hath broken thee words; then shalt thou say, created, till iniquity was Rejoice over her, thou Thy riches, and thy fairs, against this place, to cut it multitude of thy merchan-heaven, and ye holy thy merchandise, thy mari- off, that none shall remain dise they have filled the you on her. And a of thy merchandise, and all desolate for ever. And it therefore I will cast thee mighty angel took up thy men of war, that are shall be, when thou hast as profane out of the millstone, and cast it pany which is in the midst this book, that thou shalt will destroy thee, O cover-Thus with violence midst of the seas in the it into the midst of Euph- of the stones of fire. Thine shall that great city day of thy ruin. The rates: and thou shalt say, heart was lifted up because Babylon be thrown suburbs shall shake at the Thus shall Babylon sink, of thy beauty, thou hast for God hath avenged calkers, and the occupiers beast, but that it shall be and thou hast sinned: into the sea, saying, of thee, shall fall into the bind a stone to it, and cast ing cherub, from the midst down, and shall be sound of the cry of thy and shall not rise from the corrupted thy wisdom by found no more at all. pilots. And all that handle evil that I will bring upon reason of thy brightness: And the voice of har- the oar, the mariners, and her: and they shall be I will cast thee to the pers, and musicians, all the pilots of the sea, weary. Thus far are the ground, I will lay thee apostles and prophets; ners, and thy pilots, thy in it, neither man nor midst of thee with violence, a stone like a great in thee, and in all thy com- made an end of reading mountain of God: and I and of pipers, and shall come down from their words of Jeremiah. is she made desolate, in the midst of the seas. APOCALYPSE.

JER. LI. 49. As Babylon defiled thy sanctuaries by

heard no more at all the land; and shall cause trumpeters, shall be ships, they shall stand upon

O Lord, thou hast spoken found in thee. By the behold thee. Thou hast before kings, that they may

I bring forth a fire from

the midst of thee, it shall

in thee; and no crafts- their voice to be heard hath caused the slain of the multitude of thine iniman, of whatsoever against thee, and shall cry Israel to fall, so at Babylon quities, by the iniquity of

craft he be, shall be bitterly, and shall cast up shall fall the slain of all the thy traffick; therefore will found any more in dust upon their heads, they earth. thee; and the sound shall wallow themselves in be heard no more at make themselves utterly skine no more at all in they shall weep for thee thee; and the voice of with bitterness of heart of a millstone shall the ashes; and they shall all in thee; and the bald for thee, and gird light of a candle shall them with sackcloth, and

heard no more at all take up a lamentation for

the bridegroom and of and bitter wailing. And the bride shall be in their wailing they shall in thee: for thy mer- thee, and lament over thee, chants were the great saying, What city is like men of the earth; for Tyrus, like the destroyed

by thy sorceries were in the midst of the sea? all nations deceived. When thy wares went forth And in her was found out of the seas, thou filledst the blood of prophets, many people; thou didst

the earth in the sight of among the people shall be devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon all them that behold thee. All they that know thee astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.

and of saints, and of enrich the kings of the all that were slain upon earth with the multitude merchandise. In the time of thy riches and of thy when thou shalt be broken EZEKIEL XXVII. A POCALYPSE.

the earth.

ance. The merchants desolation. afraid, they shall be among the people shall of the waters thy merpany in the midst of thee shall fall. All the incheir kings shall be sore by the seas in the depths chandise and all thy combe astonished at thee, and roubled in their countennabitants of the isles shall

22d ver. As a sign of Prov. I. 20-33.

hiss at thee; thou shalt be mirth of tabrets ceaseth, a terror, and never shalt be the noise of them that ISAIAH XXIV.. 8. The

rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.

any more.

The 4th, 5th, 20th, and 24th verses set this Babylon in opposition to God's people, heaven, and holy apostles and prophets, and mark her as responsible for the blood of prophets, and of saints, and all that were slain upon the earth.

The 19th chapter also puts Babylon in opposition to heaven for its idolatry and bloodshed.

While in this state of opposition the city is represented as living luxuriously in superabundant affluence and pride, and inducing others, far and wide, to partake of her carelessness, ease, and wickedness. Her sins, like those of Sodom, had attracted the attention of the Lord.

The world-wide influence seems best represented by Tyre, and the reward seems to be like the fall of Tyre; while the great millstone, verse 21, recalls the decree concerning Babylon, and the casting of the stone into the river Euphrates. Jer. li. 63. These may be spiritualized as in the 11th chapter, verse 8—the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

The seat of the woman in purple and scarlet is not only on the seven mountains, but also, as in the first verse, "on many waters." These waters are explained in verse 15 to be peoples, multitudes, nations, tongues. There is a similar expression in Isaiah viii. 7—"Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks."

The construction of this chapter is interesting in its details as a communication to John.

In the first verse the angel of great power and might, showing the magnitude of the work, declares the decree from the Lord God of heaven, and the nature of the charge.

In the fourth verse, a voice from heaven gives a caution to God's people to save themselves. It also confirms the judgment.

In the ninth verse the conspicuousness of the judgment, Tyre being the instance, is shown in the lamentations of kings, merchants, and sailors.

In the 20th verse is introduced a consolatory allusion to the fifth seal—"Rejoice over her, thou heaven and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets: for God hath judged your judgment on her."

In the 25th verse, another mighty angel with the Babylonish symbol (a great stone hurled into the sea) confirms the judgment with a repetition of the charge, namely, deception of the peoples, and persecution of the saints.

CHAPTER XIX.

Verses 1-8. And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven. saving, Alleluia! Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia! And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, and the four beasts, fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saving, Amen, Alleluia! And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

As we find in the fourth chapter in the intro-

ductory scene, an ascription of praise to "The Lord God Almighty," the first person, from whose right hand the Lamb took the book, sealed with seven seals, his diploma, commissioning him, as a crowned King, to conquer and govern, so now, as in this chapter, after his victories are complete, and he is crowned with many crowns, and his name written King of kings and Lord of lords, all the powers and multitudes in heaven in succession ascribe salvation, and glory, and honour, and power to the Lord our God the Father -the Lord God omnipotent-Jehovah, saying, Alleluia, praise ye Jehovah. The people in heaven say, Alleluia, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God, in acknowledgment of the answer to the prayers of the souls under the altar crying for vengeance on the fifth seal. Psalm lix. 10-"The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies." And a second time they say, Alleluia; and the smoke of their enemies goeth up for ever and ever, an everlasting remembrancer.

The twenty-four elders, and the four living creatures, the leaders of praise in the immediate presence, joining with an Amen, Halleluia, and then the whole inhabitants of heaven from the throne, and throughout the millions of servants, small and great, unite in one grand diapason, saving, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.

They who were made perfect in holiness in the fifth seal, but who were told to wait till the number was complete, are now made perfect in happiness. John xvii. 10—All mine are thine, and I am glorified in them. So the redeemed are arrayed by the Father, and called to the marriage supper to glorify the Word of God, as John frequently calls Christ.

> VERSES 9, 10. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Verse 9. Write. In the first chapter, verse 11. John is commanded to write what he should see. The command is emphatically repeated in

the message to the seven churches, and in the other passages where gracious communications are made. Chap. xiv. 13; xix. 9; xxi. 5. The word is accompanied with an emphasised assurance, as, Yea, saith the Spirit. These are the true sayings of God. These words are faithful and true.

Verse 10. John was about to offer the same worship to one of the seven angels who was his guide as he would do to God. This was instantly stopped, as Cornelius was stopped by Peter, the priest of Jupiter, by Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, and as John was stopped by one of the seven angels, in chap. xxii. 8. When John was in the presence of Jesus, and saw him, he fell at his feet as dead. Jesus did not rebuke him, but comforted him. "He laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not," &c.

There may be noticed a special sympathy between the vial angels and the martyrs in the fifth seal, and the remnant of the seed of woman, chap. xii. 17. I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus.

VERSE 11. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

In the thirteenth verse he is also called the Word of God.

Verses 11-16. And I saw heaven opened. and behold a white horse: and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of war, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself: and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

This is the same Jesus as is represented as sitting on a white horse, with a bow in his hand, and a crown was given him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer in the first seal. The same like unto the Son of Man, who sat on a white cloud, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle, and who was present when the winepress was trodden without

the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles; the same whose eyes were as a flame of fire (chap.i.14); the same out of whose mouth (chap. i. 16) went a sharp two-edged sword.

In the letter to the church in Pergamum (chap. ii. 12), which city is described as Satan's seat, where Satan dwelleth, and which was notorious for its idolatry, false doctrines, and the murder of at least one saint, he who dictates the letter is described as he who hath the sharp two-edged sword. Here all these characteristics are applied, the prophecies of the 2d and 45th Psalms are referred to. The final battle is described, for which the spirits of devils gathered the kings of the earth and the whole world together into Armageddon (chap. xvi. 16).

The Word of God is clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, which was marked with the style of King of kings and Lord of lords. The blood on the vesture referred to is the blood of vengeance, as in Isaiah lxiii., not the blood of atonement referred to in Revelation, chap. vii. 14th verse, in which the linen of the armies that followed were made clean—"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in

righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."

Reference is made to the avenging of the prophets and saints in answer to the souls under the altar in Rev. xi. 18, xii. 11, xv. 3, xvi. 6, xviii. 20, xix. 2; and they are avenged on the beast—the false prophet, and those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image.

Verses 17, 18. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst

of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

Ezekiel xxxix. 17-22—"And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God. And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward."

The extirpation of apostasy here determined casts back to the scenes in which Jehu (2 Kings x.) and Josiah (2 Kings xxiii.) were the chief actors, the central place of which was the plain of Esdraelon, of which the valley of Megiddo is an offset.

Isaiah xi. 4, 5—"But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

CHAPTER XX.

Verses 1-4. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and

I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Verses 1, 2, 3. "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand." Compare with 9th chapter, fifth trumpet—"And I saw a star from heaven fallen unto the earth, and there was given unto him the key of the abyss;" also Rev. xii. 12-"Woe for the earth and for the sea! because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time." The place here is the earth. The abyss seems to be in the earth. The doom seems to be temporary isolation. The devil (collective), instead of being as a roaring lion, walking about seeking whom he may devour, is represented as a chained lion secured as in a vast cavern. The permission to work evil is restrained for a time. Jude 6-"And angels which kept not their own principality (refused obedience), but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great

day;" also 2 Peter ii. 4—"For if God spared not angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits (or chains) of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." Here is a place of confinement for sinning angels, a temporary prison, a certain reservation till the final doom. These instigations of the devil, namely, the beast, the false prophet, are made extinct first. Then the devil is restrained. The instruments of evil being destroyed, these being the beast and the false prophet, the devil is restrained, so that no such institutions may be erected for a period symbolised by 1000 years after that, see 8th and 9th verses; also Rev. xi. 5—a new apostasy, a falling away.

Verse 4. "And I saw thrones." As the happiness of the saints is not yet perfected, the thousand years may be compared with the period referred to (Rev. vi. 11), where the souls under the altar were given white robes; and it was said unto them to rest yet a little season until the fulfilment of the whole body of martyrs.

The little season, whatever length it may be, seems a more correct explanation than the acceptance of the 1000 years as an exact astronomical period in a book where symbolism is the rule.

The characteristics of the fifth and sixth seals are symbolized in this chapter. These are—the honouring of the martyrs, and the end of the present system. So these passages may be explanatory of each other.

Those who sat on the thrones were:—

- I. Those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, as in chapter 6.
- II. Those who were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held. Again referred to, Rev. xix. 8.
- III. Those who had not worshipped the beast, &c.
- IV. James i. 12—"Blessed is the man who endureth temptation: for when he hath been approved he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord promised to them that love him." The poor in spirit, also they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; and in the last beatitude they are on the same platform as the prophets.

The Church of Thyatira has the promise that "he who overcometh and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, &c., even as I have received from my Father."

The Church in Sardis has a few names which have not defiled their garments, "and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy. He that overcometh shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before my Father and his angels."

To the Church of the Laodiceans it is said—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Chapter xxi. 7—"He that overcometh shall inherit all things."

The Church of Smyrna. "Be thou faithful, and I will give thee a crown of life." 1 Pet. v. 4. The elders are promised—"And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

From the above passages it will be seen to whom it was promised to occupy the thrones and to be made judges. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit on my throne."

This speaks to a preference given over a distinct period in honour of their special witnessing. A translation through martyrdom. They are souls who resisted steadfast in the faith.

The preference dates up to the destruction of apostasy, mythological apostasy, and mythological apostasy in its christened form. The beast, the false prophet, and the worshippers of his image and those who carried his impress, that means all who interpose anything "before God" and his Christ. 2 Cor. x. 5.—" Imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." Also Ex. xx. 3, 4, 5.

> Verses 5-10. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven. and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Verse 5. "The rest of the dead." 2 Pet. iii. 8, 1 Thess. iv. 13.

The souls of believers are enthroned, see 4th verse. The ψυχας, the δι μενοι, are enthroned. The eternal breath of life that Jehovah breathed into the dust of the earth's nostrils that made him an eternal being. A living soul cannot die. The soul if not revivified directly is suspended as in sleep in an inactive Hades. Hades implies inactivity, only there may be energies imparted or exhibitions of glory which impart life and activity under strict conditions. For instance, the period between Christ's death and his meeting Mary. John xx. 17—"When he said. Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." There is an imperceptible period, only a transition state, as Luke xxiii. 43.—"To-day (the day of the decease) thou shalt be with me in paradise," as was said to the thief. Then there is the altered suspense of the souls under the altar. Rev. vi. 11.

There is no reference to the souls of unbelievers till the judgment. The bodies of believers shall all at one time be united to their previously glorified souls, these souls being united to Christ as they fall in. Verse 6. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." John v. 24—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth in him that hath sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." This passage is valuable as being from John's own pen.

Verse 7. "And when the thousand years are expired." It is a spiritual government, a spiritual restraint, and a spiritual victory, either by conviction direct from the Holy Spirit, or by natural terrors and penitence as was seen in the trumpet scenes. The 18th Psalm describes such a scene. The 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel seem to be concentrated here. Ezekiel was a pre-Babylonish captivity prophet; so the idea here seems to be rather an abstract one, that, as God overruled the north-eastern peoples, and delivered the Jews, so the opponents of the truth and the devil at a fixed time would be judged. Then after the condemnation of the devil comes the great judgment, after which there is no more death, nor a condition of spirits and bodies being separate.

In the Lake of Fire the Devil and the beast and the false prophet will be tormented day and night (no day), for ever and ever in chains of darkness, and death and hell (Hades), and whomsoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

> VERSES 11-15. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Verse 11. "And I saw a great white throne," and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life."

Death and Hades were put an end to, and then there was a determination according to individual merits, and any who were not found written in the Book of Life, that is, the Book which registers with approval the deeds of individual enquirers after Christ's truth, individual witnesses thereof on the grounds of individual responsibility (Dan. xii. 1-4; Phil. iv. 3; Rev. iii. 5; Luke xi. 9).

The books were opened. Besides the Book of Life, what were they?

The Book of the Law (Neh. viii. 5).

The Book of the Wars of the Lord, what he did in the Red Sea and in the brooks of Arnon (Num. xxi. 14).

The Book of Messianic Prophecy (Ps. xl. 7; Heb. x. 7).

The Book of Creation (Ps. cxxxix. 16).

The Book of Penitence (Ps. lvi. 8).

The Book of Apostasy and Vengeance (Ps. lxix. 28; Isa. xxx. 8; Jer. xxxvi. 2; Isa. xxxiv. 16).

CHAPTER XXI.

VERSE 1. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

Isa lxv. 17-19—"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former

shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying."

Chap. xx. 11—"From whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was no more place found for them."

This vision is that of the condition of things to be after the judgment—a new creation without a sea, no separation, former geographical distinctions obliterated.

2 Pet. iii. 12, 13—"Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Verse 2. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The 45th Psalm comes in here as suitably as

it did in the kingly characteristic of the first seal

Isa. lxii. 1—" Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean."

Isa. lxiv. 5—" For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called."

Isa. lxi. 10—"I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

Eph. v. 7—"But that it should be holy and without blemish."

2 Cor. v. 1—" For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

This passage speaks to the double signification of the bride as the holy city, and the Lamb's wife, xix. 7.

Verses 3, 4. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

A covenant God. Lev. xxvi. 11, 12—"And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people."

2 Cor. vi. 18—" And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

New sympathies; a universal spiritual affinity; no more a temple; no more symbols; no more sun nor moon; no more mere human existence, but a direct warm sympathy betwixt God and his people. His people made perfect in unalloyed happiness in the presence of the Almighty Love. Not only the results of pain and death removed, but these causes of grief are passed away, and God all to all.

VERSES 5, 6. And he that sat upon the

throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

The fiat is pronounced in John's hearing, but this special revelation to John being long anticipatory of the event, he is told to write it down, for it is the eternal purpose, faithful and true, unchangeable, absolutely reliable; and as one who signs a deed applies his seal to it, He said to John, "It is done."

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the all in all." This declaration from heaven is from the throne itself, the highest possible authority, without any intervention of angel.

"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely," is addressed to the Church then and now.

Rom. vi. 23—"But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Isaiah lv.—The fountain is a free gift.

Psalm xxxvi. 8, 9—"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou

shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."

Isaiah xii. 3—"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

The conversation with the woman of Samaria. John iv. 14—"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

John vii. 37, 38—" In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

VERSE 7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things.

He shall receive all the promises of the fourth verse.

Matt. xxv. 34—"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Rom. viii. 32-" He that spared not his own

Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Then follows a warning.

VERSE 8. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whore-mongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

1 Cor. vi. 9, 10—"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Eph. v. 5—" For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

But the fearful.

Luke xix. 20—"And another came, saying, Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee. . . . Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked man."

Matt. xxv. 30—"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Unbelievers and all liars.

Psalm lxxviii. 35-37 — "And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant."

VERSES 9-11. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

In the fourth chapter, 2, 3—"And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald."

Chap. xxi. 23. God lightens the city, and the Lamb is the light thereof, the whole atmosphere being radiant with the glory of God, and the rainbow like glory round about. The rainbow is not required now, as that sign of the covenant betwixt God and every living creature formerly was. But the prismatic colours refracted and reflected by stones and gems of crystalline purity and various hues, the very gold shining in its purity like glass, would produce as gorgeous an effect as could be conceivable by man, whose vision is only capable of seeing as through a glass dimly. See the 17th chapter of Matthew, the transfiguration. Exod. xxxiv. 30. Moses.

The foundations. Eph. ii. 20—"And are built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

VERSES 12-27. And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the south,

three gates; and on the west, three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The gates are for the servants of God. They are named and attended to. Of the 144,000 sealed ones of the tribes of Israel, each tribe has its gate. The measuring is a sign of care and protection as seen in Ezekiel, and in the 11th chapter, where the court without the temple and the city are not to be measured till the end of the forty-two month period, the time referred to in this passage. Now Jerusalem purified is measured.

Isaiah lx. 18-21—"But thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw

itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy morning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous."

The 20th chapter winds up with those whosoever were not found written in the Book of Life. This chapter sums up with the condition of those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. 2 Pet. i. 11—"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

CHAPTER XXII.

The description of the city is continued in the first five verses.

VERSE 1. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Psalm xlvi. 4—"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High."

Verse 2. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and

the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Ezek. xlvii., and Eden, Gen. ii. The trees of life always covered with blossom, always full in bearing, the leaves medicinal. To the angel of the Church in Ephesus it was said, Rev. ii. 7—"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the paradise of God."

Different from the first paradise with its tree of life.

Verses 3-5. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever

"And they shall see his face." Being perfect in holiness, and pure in heart, they shall see God. And being in a highly glorified state, they being like God, though in an inferior degree, shall see him as he is, and his name shall be on their foreheads. As the high priest's mitre bore holiness to the Lord, so these crowned kings and priests shall bear God's name on their foreheads, and

they shall reign for ever and ever. Psalm xxxvi. 9—" For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."

Psalm xvii. 15—"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

Phil. iii. 21—"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

> Verses 6, 7. And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Compare with the first three verses of this book, which words are nearly identical.

> VERSE 8. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

This seems to have been, as a similar act recorded (Rev. xix. 10) was, an act of profound gratitude; but the angel forbids it as contrary to

the eternal laws in the first and second commandments, so he told John—

> VERSE 9. . . . See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

Matt. iv. 10-"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." And he informed John, "I am thy fellow-servant."

> VERSE 10. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

Reserve not the teachings of this book; they are for the churches now. (See 16th verse.)

> Verse 12. And, behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Jesus here interposes personally.

Referring back to the 11th verse, there is a time when the Spirit ceases to strive, Gen. vi. 3. The Spirit of God will not always strive with man. Hosea—" Ephraim is joined to his idols, leave him alone." Romans ii, 6-8.—"Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in welldoing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath."

2 Tim. ii. 11, 12—" It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us."

VERSE 13. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

In Rev. iii. 15 — "The beginning of the creation of God." See also Heb. i. 10; and here the final disposer.

VERSE 14. Blessed are they that do his commandments, [that wash their robes] that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Whence the unrighteous are excluded.

Verses 15, 16. For without are dogs (unbelievers), and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Isaiah xi. 1.—" And there shall come forth a

rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."

Jer. xxiii. 5—"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."

Luke xx. 41-44—"And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son? And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?"

Numbers xxiv. 17—" I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel."

He announces Himself—I am the prophetic Messiah—Jesus. I invite all, all to come; and the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. Whoever hears the invitation, let him publish the invitation, and whosoever will let him come. John vi. 37—"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." And let him take of the water of life freely, without price or hindrance.

There is a caution against tampering with this book, as they who do so will surely wrest the Scripture to their own destruction.

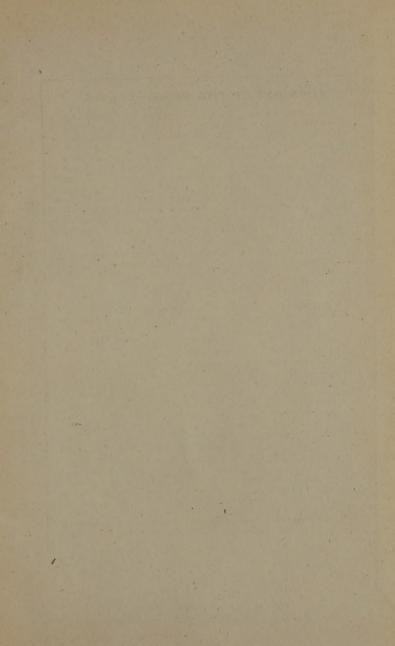
"Behold I come quickly." Thrice repeated in this chapter, in the 7th, 12th, and 20th verses. The sudden coming to each individual is frequently taught in the New Testament as a goad and spur to preparedness. Here in view of the end, it is specially urged. It is well to be able to say, "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all. Amen."

Luke xii. 35-40; Matt. xxv. 13; Mark xiii. 32-37; Rev. xvi. 15.

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